

Volume 58 • Issue 3 • May 2006

Woroni



The
SEX
issue

Hilltop Hoods @ ANU ❑ Interview with the Education
Minister ❑ Your sex slave ❑ Gay dating scene ❑ Vagina
maintenance ❑ Does penis size matter? ❑ Censorship ❑
Procrastination ❑ Peter Carey ❑ and much more

Jealous, Ladies?



NUS President Rose Jackson endorses Josh

Now you too can



**Win a date
with
Joshua-Gordon
Carr!**

Contact Woroni at
woroni@anu.edu.au
to find out how today!

Girl not included
Actual prize may differ from one shown above

Woroni

10 censors speak up

The Directorate of Student Publications defends its ongoing censorship of *Woroni*.

12 your sex slave

Voluntary sexual bondage is being stifled by the nanny state, argues Dr Karloff Lukoshenko.

15 gay dating scene

Matt Laing offers advice on how, and whom, to pick up in the gay online dating services.

19 rogan gash

Theodore Theodorus finds the c-word has become passé. Fortunately, the English have come up with the perfect replacement.

20 caring for vagina

Keira Paterson advises how to take care of yours, with such gems as: "If you wouldn't put it up your ear/nose/throat, then don't put it down there!"

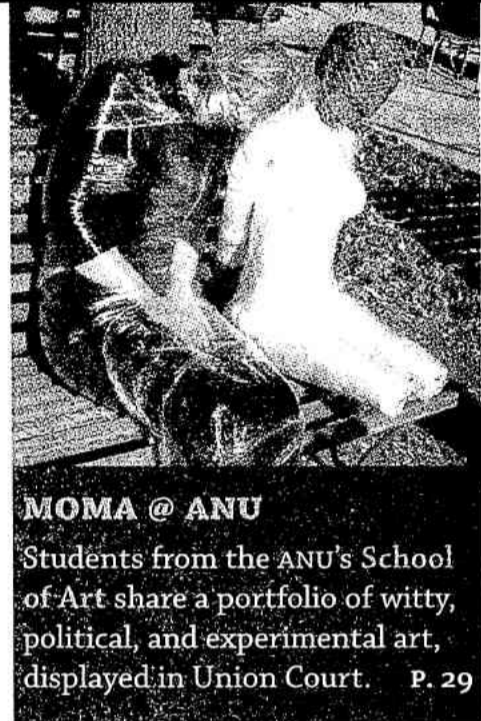
27 sexual privacy

Pat Delaney ponders why the state feels the need to go peeping in our bedrooms... especially if you're a teen in Kansas.



Penis size

Megan Leahy continues her sizzling contributions by asking a group of female friends what they think about size. P. 18



MOMA @ ANU

Students from the ANU's School of Art share a portfolio of witty, political, and experimental art, displayed in Union Court. P. 29

24 dutch treat

Patrick Moody reluctantly becomes part of the attraction at Amsterdam's Pink Elephant show.

25 black armband

Melanie Poole learns a powerful lesson in the Aboriginal township of Oenpelli, Northern Territory.

28 a partner paucity

Svi Gribov on how markets prevent economists from picking up.

28 julie bishop, m.p.

Jeremy Farrell interviews the federal Education Minister.

30 practicality

Alex Douglas sees more to life.

48 procrastination

Celia Winnett put off assessment to write this. (That's the spirit!)

33 leaving the s.r.c.

Kieran Bennett ditches his haunt.

regulars

5 Editorial	39 Movies
6 News	40 Music
8 Dear <i>Woroni</i>	42 Interview
36 Review	45 Bits 'n' Pieces
38 Books	46 The

features


Woroni is the official publication of the ANU Students' Association. Opinions are not necessarily those of the editors or ANUSA.

Woroni
c/o ANUSA
Student Facilities Building 17
AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
ACT 0200

Phone: (02) 6248 7127
Email: woroni@anu.edu.au

Editors: James Robertson, Matt Laing, Toby Halligan • Humour: Toby Halligan • Reviews: Justin Pritchard • News: Ross Harvey • Staff writers: Pip Blackwood, Alex Douglas • Cartoons: Marija Tafлага • Advertising guru: Nick Harris • Layout & photography: Anthony Mannering • Photography & cover art: Saad "Hard" Hafiz

Contributors: Michael Atkins, Kieran Bennett, Laura Crespo, Pat Delaney, Alex Douglas, Jeremy Farrell, Rón Fraser, Svi Gribov, Saad Hafiz, Toby Halligan, Ben Hermann, Matt Laing, Megan Leahy, Dr Karloff Lukoshenko, Patrick Moody, Keira Paterson, Melanie Poole, Justin Pritchard, Alex Rafalowitz, Nithya Sambasivam, Clint Stoker, Theodore Theodorus, Celia Winnett



NO!

**You don't have to put up with
harassment or discrimination**

**See staff of the Equity and Diversity Unit
for advice or support on these issues**

Email: EquityandDiversity@anu.edu.au

Tel: 6125 3868; 6125 3595

WWW: www.anu.edu.au/equity

From the editors

We like sex. So do you. Enjoy this issue.

In the spirit of free speech and continuing debate we'd like to make a few comments about the approach the executive has taken to censorship. While we understand we don't always see things eye to eye we respect that they allow us to express ourselves and the opinions of students.

the DSP

Of course,

take his and shove it

it, anyway?

it's im-

portant that it be said.

James, Matt, & Toby

Issue 4 deadline:
**Saturday,
27 May**

Letters, articles,
news, photos...

See p. 3 for contact details



<http://rubens.anu.edu.au/>

ANU news

Latham remains cranky

Former Labor leader Mark Latham delivered a lecture before a first-year Political Science class at the ANU, advising them not to enter politics.

A particularly gaunt Latham, seemingly fatigued from his recent troubles with pancreatitis, appeared amid tight security before an estimated audience of 550 packed into Manning Clark Lecture Theatre 1.

Latham spent most of the lecture delivering a series of attacks against the various elements who opposed him during his brief stint as opposition leader.

Stephen Conroy and "perverts in the media" were just two of the targets singled out for special criticism.

One such "pervert" was Andrew Fraser, a Political Science student at the ANU and journalist for *The Canberra Times*. It was during the lecture that the following exchange took place:

LECTURER: So we'll open up the floor for questions to Mr Latham... [points at Fraser] The man in the centre.

[Fraser stands up]

LATHAM: No way mate, I recognise your face from the press gallery. You know this is a student-only lecture.

FRASER: I'm a student as well, you know.

LATHAM: Yeah of what? Bullshit? Just sit down.

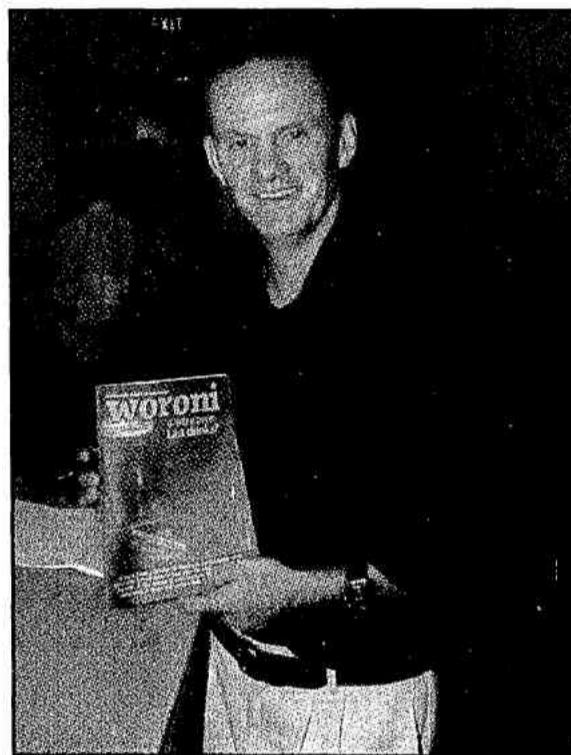
However, the conflict didn't end with that. Clearly abandoning his pledge of "no more crudity", the following exchange took place:

STUDENT: You got twelve months of leadership and you fucked up. You didn't nearly win. You fucked up. How can you blame everyone but yourself?

LATHAM: I'm sorry, I didn't come in here and expose myself as a miserable arsewipe.

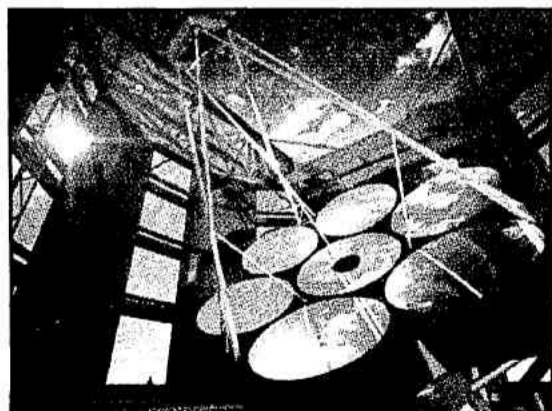
Latham delivered the lecture only hours after his non-attendance at a Sydney magistrates' court, where he was formally charged with attacking press photographer Ross Schultz outside a fast food restaurant.

The incident arose after Schultz allegedly photographed Mr Latham's children. Mr Latham responded first by stealing the photographer's camera, then attempting to punch him unconscious after he later requested it be returned. Mr Latham later handed the smashed camera to police.



Above Latham encouraged students to avoid politics and read *Woroni* instead

ANU to help with Chilean telescope



Above Artist's impression

The ANU is set to participate in project aiming to build the world's most powerful telescope.

The project will be done in a consortium arrangement, with the ANU assisting in the design and development phase of the project.

The Giant Magellan Telescope, currently in the early planning stages, is set to be

one of only a handful of cutting-edge Extremely Large Telescopes to be built over the next two decades.

The design is expected to include a moving mass of 1,000 metric tonnes and housing dome around 18 storeys tall.

The telescope is set to be built in northern Chile.

Construction will start in 2010, with full operation commencing

\$3.6 million to aid Med School training

A multi-million dollar Commonwealth Government grant to the ANU Medical School will see an expansion of clinical training placements across the NSW regional area.

The \$3.6 million grant, unveiled by Health Minister Tony Abbott, will support 32 placements over the next two years at hospitals in Bega, Cooma, Goulburn, Young, and Batemans Bay.

A further \$1.26 million has

been given to construct facilities for the programs in Goulburn, Cooma, and Young.

In unveiling the scheme Mr Abbott cited its importance as part of an overall plan to improve medical services out in the bush.

With rural medical practice presenting many unique challenges, schemes like this are essential to ensuring such areas are supported with health facilities well into the future.



Above Mr Abbott at the launch

Woroni falls into a fat trap

Dear Editor,

Your interview with Robert Fisk was very interesting.

However, the last paragraph contains a mis-transcription. While it may be correct that George Bush and his allies walked into an almighty trap in Iraq, I suggest the reference to stopping "militarising this area with our fat traps and our phoney dictators..." should read "satraps".

Cheers,
Ron Fraser

satrap /'sā·trāp, sāt' rāp/, *n.*,

1. a governor of a province in ancient Persia.
2. a ruler.
3. a subordinate bureaucrat or official: *The satraps of Capitol Hill will not sit idly by.*



Abimelech, Satrap of Gaza

THE ARMY. THE EDGE.

YOU DON'T BECOME A LEADER BY FOLLOWING A LECTURE.



If you're a uni student, being an Officer in your local Army Reserve unit is a great way to develop leadership skills that will benefit you in your future career. It's also a real opportunity to get outdoors, do something different and meet new people. It's not a huge commitment, and you'll receive tax-free pay that won't affect your Austudy. Call **13 19 01** for details about our next information session. Or visit www.defencejobs.gov.au/studentpub/officer

ARMY RESERVE THE PART TIME OF YOUR LIFE.

Dear Woroni

contact details // see page 3

ANU Student Watch's many mistakes

The ANU Student Watch made the first of many mistakes when they misspelt my name in Issue 2 for 2006.

What they did get right was that I was hack in the traditional sense of the word: that is a dodgy partisan journalist.

I did write for my student mag in SA and so can say with as much authority as a drunk eating a yiros (read falafel) that *Woroni* is a damn good feed. Keep up the good work, eds, but maybe, I don't know, edit the spelling every now and again.

And to the writers of ANU Student Watch, as amusing as you are, you are equally cowardly and ill-informed. Why not lift the veil of anonymity and just be ill-informed instead?

Peace out,
Alex Rafalowicz

La Femme Anonyma reveals herself

Greetings from "Anonymous Feminist", author of the much contested "Perils of Prick Teasing" article that was published in the first issue of *Woroni* this year and shot down on two separate instances in the second.

I would like to address Brittany, who criticises my anonymity and questions the validity of a feminist standpoint.

Hi, Brittany. My name is Megan Leahy. There are two reasons that I did not print my name with that article.

The first is that I wrote another article of a similar nature in that issue and thought that readers may think it was a bit dodgy that one person had written two articles that were published practically next to each other.

The second is that the piece was of a fairly personal nature, and some of the men I have had experiences with attend ANU and possibly read *Woroni*. I thought they could be offended by or misinterpret it (which some people seem to have done).

I did not want this to happen because it was not meant to be a pointed or critical article – rather one commenting on the continuing social pressures women experience in relation to sexuality.

Therefore, the reason I was anonymous for the article is not because I'm too insecure or too modest, but rather because I'm not a bitch.

The link you drew between my article and *Ms* magazine submissions was tenuous. I'm not sure if you've read a whole lot of *Ms* magazine, which tends to focus on Liberal feminist issues such as legislation and a woman's right to choose. Yet you yourself made the claim that my article was radical feminist (which I don't entirely agree with, nor would Valerie Solanas).

Oh, yeah, and it is "Ms".

And to Anonymous Bloke:

Thank you kindly for your insightful analysis and commentary on female biology and sexual response.

Perhaps, however, an Arts de-

gree may do you well in strengthening your grasp on the concept of sexuality being not only biologically determined but also largely socially constructed.

Sorry to get all wanky Arts student on you, but sex is, in fact, a little more complicated than a physical act unadulterated by culture.

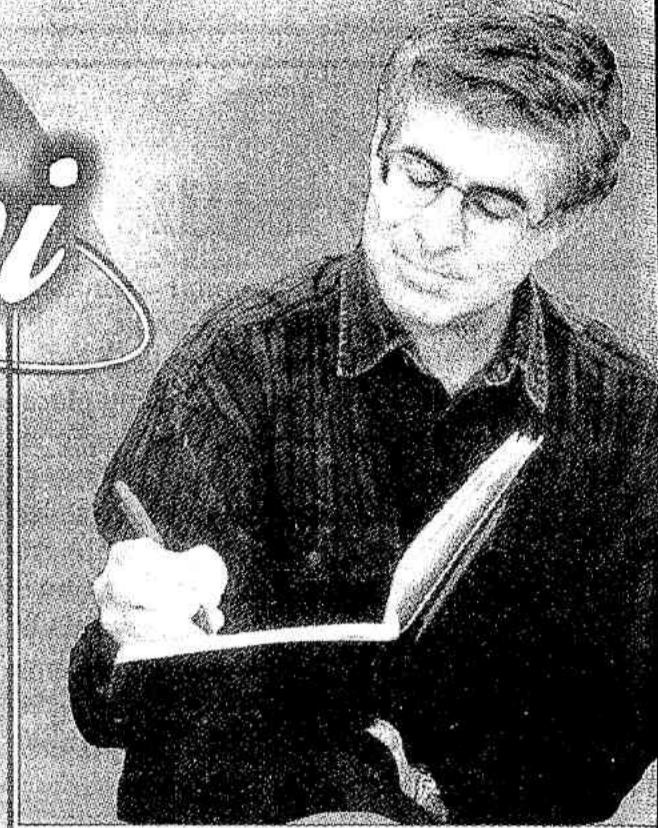
I'd also like to assert that the article was in no way anti-male. I did not say all men ignore women after they sleep with them, nor did I say that women are morally superior and always act appropriately after sex.

In fact, I would argue it is all the social bullshit that surrounds sex that makes people act in such bizarre ways.

Thanks for your selfless offer to help change my view of and comfort levels with sex, but I discussed it with my boyfriend and we decided that he provided me with more than enough unself-conscious, relaxed, dripping wet, legs behind my head, up-against-the-wall, tantric, multiple-orgasmic sex – all with the added guarantee of not ignoring me afterwards.

Megan

PS: I'd like to voice my appreciation for Harry in his response to the sexist nature of the first issue of *Woroni*, namely the ANU Student Watch section.



Who knows what 'citation' means?

After reading both recent *Woroni* articles on Venezuela, I am left feeling slightly more ill each time I think of them.

Too many times I am left wondering where exactly the writers are getting their material from – and too many times I am left feeling that the conclusions they reach are based on assumptions they each have brought to the issue.

Of course, given their poor standing at the moment, many socialist groups are desperate to jump on the old Bolivarian band wagon and draw strength from it.

And Joseph Kony, whatever his position, seems intent on portraying Chavez as akin to Mugabe and similar and goes on to continuously draw on contested evidence for his salient points.

Do we resort to references to

save us?

Yes, please. At least they will tell me where you are getting your information so that I can assess it independently from my own judgment of your deductive abilities, which I clearly cannot honestly judge from one article. (For those curious, the single biggest source of information I consult about Venezuela is <www.zmag.org>.)

So what are we left with? Should we encourage the occasional use of references in articles in *Woroni*? Perhaps Toby can take this one to the streets?

*Don't make babies,
Thomas Watson*

ANUSA killing our free speech, so stop!

Recently, we've been subjected to reading a *Woroni* which looks increasingly like kindergarten students have been let loose with

black crayons.

Personally, I think I'd prefer a random act like that to the subjective criteria used by ANUSA.

As Alex Douglas pointed out in the last edition of *Woroni*, students now face a choice about what they want their only university-wide publication to be.

We can have a *Woroni* which trusts its elected editors with sole responsibility for content (subject to independent legal advice on defamation), or we can allow our magazine to become a mouthpiece for ANUSA to promote its values.

Throughout last year we were bombarded with arguments against VSU comparing a government levying taxes with compulsory student unionism. If that's a legitimate analogy, surely we can also ask why John Howard, Tony Abbott, and Peter Costello don't have a right of veto on every topic that goes to air on the ABC or SBS.

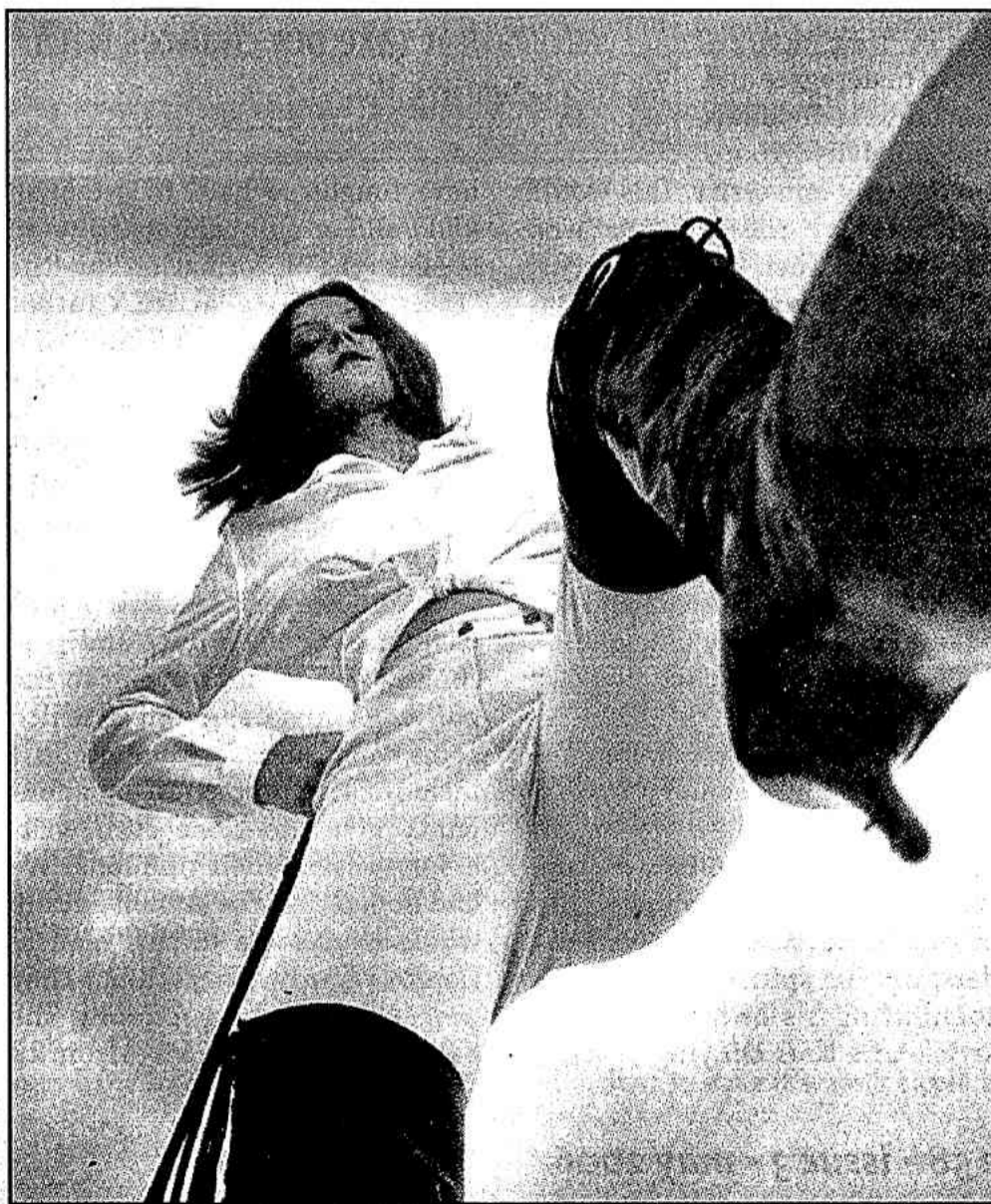
The right to freedom of political communication (between the government and the public) is implicitly enshrined in Australia's constitution. The reason for this is pretty obvious when you consider the alternative: public outrage at a station that is merely a propaganda machine for the government.

I don't want to see this happen to *Woroni*. If the editors are to be constrained, it should not be by the body *Woroni* is mostly likely to criticise.

I'm not advocating slander, harassment, or defamation. I'm advocating a free and open forum where the editors, like any other form of media in Australia, determine what goes to print (subject to laws on defamation and harassment).

To do otherwise would destroy the accountability of ANUSA and our right to say and read whatever we like.

Mark Smyth



Left *Woroni* editors are suffering at the hands of ANUSA's censors

The role of the black Texta

The members of the **Directorate of Student Publications**, the ANUSA body that censors *Woroni*, lay out their rationale and defence

There's no such thing as free speech in Australia.

This may be one of those boring technicalities that only law students are aware of; just in case you missed it or don't believe it because *Law and Order* said otherwise: there is no such thing as free speech in Australia, or arguably anywhere – but more on this later.

This subsidiary though pertinent issue also conveniently leads to the purpose of this article. We are three of those students who wield the “black Texta” that Alex Douglas discussed in the last *Woroni*. As such, we'd like to give you our perspective on why *Woroni* is not an appropriate forum for unadulterated free speech, and introduce those few pesky facts into the debate that may better inform your perspective.

Yes, *Woroni* is censored

Before *Woroni* goes to print, the entire publication is “DSPed”. This means that it is checked – cover to cover – for material that is racist, sexist or homophobic.

In addition, the President, Treasurer, and General Secretary are required to ensure that there is nothing in any of our publications that may give rise to civil or criminal liability.

As the three trustees of ANUSA, we personally are jointly and severally liable for any legal action that may be taken against ANUSA for such a breach.

For those of you who read *Woroni*, you can probably imagine what a pain in the derriere this could turn out to be. And that's not including having to actually

read every single edition closely. (Sometimes we think we'd rather take our chances with the lawsuits.)

We don't think it is unreasonable that *Woroni* is DSPed for these minimal criteria. Both ANUSA and the university recognise that some discourse detracts from an effective learning and social environment. This is why we don't accept racism, homophobia, sexism or even bullying.

Further, the role of ANUSA is to promote and enhance the welfare of students. As such, we should not put ANUSA's name to a publication that actively seeks to derogate and victimise individuals and minority groups within this university. This would be to betray the students who have placed their faith and trust in us as their representatives. It is simply archaic to suggest that this should be allowed.

We don't force *Woroni* to be nice

It should also be acknowledged at this point that *Woroni* and the DSPers do personally disagree on publishing material that falls outside these criteria.

For example, we were disgusted with “Saleem Hussain's” insinuation in the last *Woroni* that international students are contributing to the dumbing down of our universities. We even understand his spinelessness in not committing his own name to his article and thus denying others a

legitimate right of reply to their accuser. But it simply fell outside the established criteria of what can be DSPed and the article was published despite our personal objections.

The point is that DSPing is not about censorship or even ideological differences between *Woroni* and the ANUSA DSPers; it's about respecting legal boundaries, and the societal boundaries that students

“We are personally liable for any legal action taken against ANUSA. As such, we have to actually read every single edition closely. (Sometimes we think we'd rather take our chances with the lawsuits.)”

have fought so hard to establish and build on this campus.

For the information of the “Debate not Hate” article's author in the last *Woroni*, it is *Woroni* that can, and has chosen not to, draw the line at hurting others. This is beyond ANUSA's power, as *Woroni* necessarily enjoys a high level of independence, much like ANUSA departments.

It is, however, a fact that people have already been hurt and personally we will not consent to the bullying and harassment to which some *Woroni* articles amount. This includes the protection of anonymity given to some such writers espousing their opinions. We had hoped that the *Woroni* editors would have come to this realisation of their own accord but they were probably busy coaxing the next Student Watch drivel from an



ex-boyfriend or Year 6 teacher... after all, life is all about priorities. We promise you, this harassment will not be left unaddressed.

Not everything should be said

Back to free speech.

What every Com Con student will know is that, unlike in the not-so-great US-of-A, the Australian courts have taken a more measured approach to this issue.

What we have is an implied freedom of political communication. That allows restrictions on extreme communications, when they are appropriate and adapted to achieving a legitimate end.

In the current political climate, governments around the world are considering issues like sedition and racial vilification much more seriously.

Certain things are not okay. ANUSA feels that racism, sexism, and homophobia are not okay and this is supported by the ANU's policies on harassment, and equity and diversity. (Oh, yeah, there are policies.) Our university community has forged its own boundaries

and DSPing ensures the survival of such standards.

Does free speech even exist?

It is further disputable that there is free speech anywhere in the world.

America does not encapsulate free speech when they ban organisations fighting for civil freedoms because their government disagrees. (See, *Law and Order* lied to you.)

Ignoring habeas corpus or locking up asylum seekers is not free speech. So called "gay-bashing" and spitting at Muslims are not free speech. Telling a co-worker her skirts are too short or not short enough is not free speech.

There are always limits. You now know the limits enacted into ANUSA's constitution and related regulations. You now know that the infamous black Texta is not used lightly or frivolously. And you know there is no such thing as free speech.

It is no secret that *Woroni* is DSPed, and it certainly not a secret why. Just in case it wasn't explicit

enough, you now know that it is subject to these minimal limitations.

As trustees, there are really only two constitutional options available to us: DSP the racist, sexist, and homophobic parts – or pull the magazine. We believe that *Woroni* has a place within student life at ANU. We may disagree with much of its content, but we respect that this is a publication by the students for the students.

We believe that this forum should be as open as possible. But we do not agree that it should be a free-for-all repository of offensive crap. This is something we should never accept.

If you disagree, come and speak to us or write to *Woroni* – after all, the more intelligent contributions, the less space there is for cheap, shameless gossip.

We may have a black Texta, but we love a good debate. ■

Nithya Sambasivam, Laura Crespo, and Michael Atkins are ANUSA's General Secretary, President, and Treasurer (respectively), and are all ANUSA Trustees.

You and your

Issues of law and discipline – lots of discipline

It's time to stop interfering with sentient adults. As a society we must let willing slaves and their masters enter binding contracts.

Introduction

A unique social movement is coming to consciousness. Its members do not want liberation. In fact, they desire the most abject servitude imaginable. They hope to be bound and gagged, beaten, flogged, spanked and whipped, branded, tattooed, and scarified. They long to have their flaccid genitalia crushed in vices, nailed to planks and pumped full of hot wax.

But at every stage they find their desires frustrated by laws intended to protect them, by the interference of the paternalistic state.

I am of course alluding to the invidious legal position of masochists, and the ongoing campaign for the recognition of their informed consent to sadistic sexual violence. This paper concerns one attempt to bring masochism within the legal order: the bondage contract.

The Bondage Contract

While most contracts effect a reciprocal exchange of goods or services, the bondage contract establishes a lasting relationship of sexual slavery, recognising and circumscribing a gross power imbalance between a sadist and his gimp (or "fag").

The bondage contract establishes the slave's consent to a wide range of civil and criminal harms. A model contract developed by the law reform policy unit at *Bound and Gagged* magazine provides:

The Slave accepts full responsibility for engaging in enslavement and releases the Master of all responsibility and liability from his actions during the enslavement.

Often the bondage contract demands a violent departure from many of the norms of the criminal law. One "Voluntary Servitude Contract" includes the clause:

I specifically waive any and all protection in law or equity, any constitutional rights or protections, and any other rule or regulation that would in any way prevent MASTER from having total control over every aspect of my life.

The slave consents emphatically to assault:

I will be spanked (paddled, etc.) with hands or implements. I understand the spankings and whippings are REAL. They WILL hurt, MAY leave marks on my body, and MAY bruise.

He even solicits rape:

I specially desire and request Master to force me to comply if necessary, using any means at Master's disposal without limit.

Restrictions on masters' conduct

It's not all unlubricated fists. Most bondage contracts place restrictions on the sadist's actions, and offer the masochist remedies in case of breach. Often the master is bound to avoid extreme harm. *Bound and Gagged* holds: "The Master has absolute power over the Slave to do with as the Master sees fit unless such actions would be imminently life-threatening."

Some masochists prefer a less permissive standard, vetoing "deliberate permanent injury", or "physical harm... that might require the attention of anyone outside the relationship".

Parties may also choose to prohibit certain acts, for example, unsafe sex, blood-letting, enforced prostitution, or body modification. Interestingly, some contracts permit the slave to enjoy a normal professional life, a necessity for upwardly mobile masochists.

Where a breach has occurred, a contract may be terminated by a "safeword" or gesture:

The slave... understands and agrees that if at any





HO, HO, HO!

sex slave

DR KARLOFF LUKOSHENKO

time the master disregards the terms of the Negotiated Boundaries Contract, the slave at that time and that time only can dissolve all contracts within the Enslavement Documents by uttering the termination word.

The "Temporary Consensual Slave Contract and Negotiated Boundaries Contract for the Enslavement Term" also provides:

If after the termination word is uttered more than once by the slave because the master has... continued to disregard the Negotiated Boundaries Contract... the slave has full legal right to press appropriate legal charges upon the master as prescribed by the slave's legal representative.

Further, a "Temporary Consensual Slave Contract" automatically lapses after a fixed period. By contrast the *Bound and Gagged* contract lasts for the life of the slave, who can be transferred to a third party on the death of the master.

Establishing a regime of discipline

The bondage contract establishes a relationship of utter subjugation, subject to general or specific limitations. It should not regulate the behaviour of the slave.

Instead the master should evolve – within the context of sadistic discipline – a formal or informal body of protocols, perhaps referring to the model code in Owens and Michaels' *The Book of the Law of Slavery*.

For instance, their "Law on the Ownership and Control of Slave Genitals" establishes "the separate and distinct ownership by The Master of the slave property's slavecock and slave ballsac" and prohibits masturbation, erection, and ejaculation.

"If allowed to urinate standing up," they declare, "the slave will stand with its wrists crossed behind its back, will control the aim of its urine flow toward the authorised receptacle without touching its Master's property."

But these eminent jurists are not infallible guides, and their intriguing propositions on the brutal disposal of terminally ill slaves might well be ignored.

The problem of enforcement

In the present legal climate it is unlikely that any properly constituted tribunal would demand specific per-

formance of a bondage contract. This is a grave injustice. Worse still, the threat of prosecution or public odium still deters sado-masochists from vindicating their rights.

The most eloquent protests against this situation come from slaves themselves. "I specifically desire none, or at least the minimum amount of government interference in this contract," writes one masochist. He pleads with the authorities:

I understand that the [US Constitution's] Sixteenth Amendment prohibits slavery and involuntary servitude. Nevertheless, for my own purposes, I desire to become and to be a DOG. I am signing this contract in an attempt to effect that status. I specifically request the courts, the law and the government not to interfere. I consider any attempt by an outside authority to in any way limit MASTER'S rights and prerogatives under this Contract to be an unwarranted interference with my constitutional right to privacy. I am of legal age and I am legally an adult who knows what he is doing. I specifically want this. In the strongest language I request the government not to "protect" me from the consequences of this decision.

This intelligent and articulate young man does not need to be protected from the ministers of his pleasure, and he is astute enough to bend every branch of the law to the ends of masochistic desire.

He transfers control of his affairs to his master, guaranteeing his rights to "all pictures, films, video, audio, public performance and recordings of me of any kind." And he notes that his master "is not responsible for workers' compensation, social security ... or other insurance's [sic] or taxes."

"That I am not an employee", our slave opines, "can be demonstrated by the IRS test that I cannot quit this Contract."

Another contract, entitled "The Master, The Slave", provides that the slave shall grant the master power of attorney, and control of all his bank accounts, stocks and bonds, mortgages and insurance policies.

All of us in the sado-masochistic underground are vitally concerned for the health and wellbeing of our slaves. It is for this reason that we would urge the courts rigidly to enforce bondage contracts, however cruel the outcome may seem in individual cases. >>



The problem is really elementary. Bondage contracts express a need for the regulation of social relations by law, a need that someone must fulfil. And who is the most likely candidate? Owens and Michaels propose the master:

As with any other part of the law, all such protections, regulations, and procedures are subject to change and amendment according to the Will of the Master, who is the final and unquestionable Authority on all points of enforcement, implementation, and/or interpretation of the Law.

This suggestion is clearly unjust, and so the community is already developing pseudo-legal mechanisms of its own. When I was last in Paris I had the pleasure to witness two cases that came before the Metropolitan Slave Court, an informal tribunal which meets in a derelict abattoir.

A slave who had refused to prostitute himself to an anthropology lecturer was forced to service the entire faculty, and a dog slave who had interfered with the neighbours' pets was splayed.

These are exciting developments in an evolving area of law.

Issues of interpretation

There are several possible approaches to the bondage contract.

A conservative might consider all sadists and masochists depraved or aberrant individuals whose demented pacts should be prohibited by law, or at least relegated to the outermost fringes of society. We cannot unravel this knotted tangle of prejudices.

A liberal might tolerate the sado-masochistic relationship, but deny it any recognition at law. Here there is a glaring double standard. If any institution resembles the bondage contract it is the sanctioned cruelty of marriage.

Why is the liberal unwilling to recognise the institution of sexual slavery? Because the bondage contract accomplishes the dissolution of the bourgeois subject.

The *Bound and Gagged* contract reads:

The Slave will surrender completely his free will during the enslavement, and the Master has the right to punish accordingly for any express or perceived exhibitions of free will.

According to "Fuckdog's Contract of Servitude", agreed between Master Grimmlock and Ian Brunton,

The slave wishes to forego the exercise of his ego, and to open himself for the use and service of MASTER... [He] wishes to relinquish to MASTER all rights and identity which he previously enjoyed as a free man.

Owens and Michaels argue:

The slave has given up all rights of person and property to the Master. It has given up its name, its family,

its friends, its community, its property and belongings, and its entire life to the Master. Even the slave's gender and species have been stripped from it, never to be returned.

The slave shall keep in mind at all times, they add,

while confined to the slave prison and punishment dungeon, that its Owner, who rules over it at all times, there and elsewhere, is its Lord, Master, Commander, and Overseer, with the Unlimited Power of a God over the mind and body of His subhuman slave prisoner and property.

Even utter self-abnegation can be subversive. When the subject freely relinquishes his freedom, he loses the capacity to submit to the authority of the state. Claim Owens and Michaels:

No form of Authority or Power over the slave, other than that of the Master, shall be recognised by the slave without the specific prior authorisation of The Master, and if any other such authority is recognised, the Master shall, in His Wisdom, set the limits and parameters of such authority.

To make a contract that precludes the making of any future contract, to contract out of bourgeois society, is an act of rebellion against the social order.

So great is the hypocrisy of bourgeois law that it cannot bear to see a white man renounce those rights it has denied to blacks, women and the poor. It won't let whitey labour on its plantation.

We radicals hope that, under a more enlightened legal order, heterosexual monogamous marriage will be just one timid version of the bondage contract, negotiated in private, entrenched in law, and enforced by the courts. As radicals, we hope to overturn the last vestiges of heterosexual dictatorship.

Along with the criminal code will perish its prohibitions on public indecency, sexual violence, and the precocious desires of children and the men who love them.

Feudalism always ends in a riot, and this burst of freedom, this divine anarchy, will at last release the reproductive forces of the West. Then and only then can the state intervene once again.

Gradually the bondage contract will be replaced by more collective modes of bargaining and by the enlightened dictat of the central power. Only under a government sympathetic to their aspirations can masochists fulfil their yearning for utter self-abnegation.

I doubt that today's slaves have the stomach to see through their resolutions, but in the end the rigours of the historical process shall make minions fit for our desires. ■

Minsk Institute of Technology





HO, HO, HO!

Long live the queens!

Let **Matt Laing** help you to pick up in the online gay dating scene

I'm no scene queen - in fact, I really can't stand much of the gay dating culture. It's an endless cavalcade of shallow and meaningless relationships interspersed with anonymous bathroom encounters and episodes of *Suddenly Susan*.

As a self-righteous homosexual, I try to wash my hands of it as much as possible; however, on occasion there can be quite a lot of fun in it.

Internet dating is probably the most harmless yet hilarious aspect of gay dating. Everything grotesque about gay culture is intensified.

On the one side there are meek, nervous users, afraid of coming out in public, who use the internet for tepid exploration of their closeted sexuality. On the other side there are predatory, misrepresenting users who exploit the anonymity of the medium and vulnerability of the former category to live out



their twisted desires. Of course it takes only a few years before the prey develop into the predators, but you get the picture.

But the sheer perversity does make it intriguing. To demonstrate this concept, I offer to take the reader through the ins and outs of internet dating so that, one day, they too can form a meaningless, short, and altogether disappointing relationship.

Step 1—Creating a profile

There are lots of personals sites to choose from: Gaydar, Mogenic, gay.com, etc. But don't be fooled; they all have the same crappy general interest articles and harbour the same types of weird freaks.

Writing your profile requires imagination. For the purposes of this exercise, I created a fake profile on Gaydar that can be used as a yardstick for other explorers.

Each website usually requires you to give some form responses and then a few open ones. Some are straightforward, but some I will endeavour to explain the finer points of.

■ **Body type** Since they all have transparent euphemisms for fat people like "solid" or "voluptuous", you might as well go the whole hog in your lying and say "athletic".

Of course, there's always the cop-out of "average". (Even the most morbidly obese people seem to describe themselves as "average" on Gaydar.)

■ **Scene** Many sites ask you describe what scene you're in.

A few choices, like "goth", are recognisable, but most are hopelessly vague and ambiguous, such as "casual" or "preppy". Just choose the word that seems the least exclusive.

■ **Dicksize/bodyhair** These must always be blatant lies, and I mean *blatant*. No matter how pathetically poorly endowed you are you must choose either the "above average" or "well-hung" options. You won't catch any bees without a little honey, if you catch my drift.

The truth will, of course, eventually be discovered once your ensnared date takes off your pants, but luckily by that stage he will be far too polite to say anything... and besides, you'll have locked the doors and windows of your bedroom so he can't get out anyway.

■ **Safe sex** If you put "yes", everyone will assume you have AIDS. Therefore tick "no" - it will have the effect of making you seem more adventurous than the spineless pussy you really are. (Hey, you're using internet dating after all!)

■ **Description** Here's your chance to really give Lewis Carroll a run for his money. Start off by saying you're looking for a nice, romantic encounter, even though you're just a degenerate looking for a quick tumble in the hay.

Try and sound more interesting that you are. Forget mentioning you won second place at the Canberra Pansy Expo last year!

Left Try mixing half-truths with blatant lies for added credibility: "Average physique, some body hair, an interest in Scottish culture..."



SEXY THANG

« You need hobbies with some chest hair – the same chest hair you chose not to mention before.

No; you're into parasailing, deep sea exploration, and alchemy. You invented a perpetual motion machine and like long walks on the beach that you own on Maui. With any luck your prospective entrappee won't be around long enough to find out.

"Quite obviously you're no Adonis, otherwise you'd be in a relationship already. To create the most attractive, unrealistic photo of yourself, just remember the three A's: angle, lighting and monotone."

■ **Photo** Quite obviously you're no Adonis (otherwise you'd be in a half-decent relationship already), so this final step in creating your profile will need a lot of creativity.

To create the most attractive, unrealistic photo of yourself, just remember the three A's: angle, lighting and monotone.

Take a photo from above you or below you with you looking down to the camera is bound to obscure things. Never look directly at the camera, all your horrendous disfigurements will be exposed.

Below Before and after – the miracle that is creative photography! (Or a Google image search, failing that.)



Make sure you have a huge amount of fill lighting to smooth out the skin, brighten the eyes, and reduce the general level of detail. If you can get the lens flare to cover your malignant cheek tumour, then you're already half way to getting your date!

Black and white further reduces detail. The combination of all these things can create some pretty decent results – and it's just a means to an end, after all.

With any luck you can turn what you normally look like in a photo into someone everybody will want to take home.

Now that you've finished your completely untrue profile, you can sit back and wait for the offers to come in.

Step 2—Reeling them in

The gay internet dating market is a fickle thing, and even the most manslut-like profile can go unanswered. As a general rule, however, you should start getting some bites within a few a days.

My fake profile has been viewed 902 times since January. I've received 56 messages since then, so I may well have broken a few hearts in the course of this experiment. But once you start receiving messages, you will have to start the process of decoding the hidden meanings.

Here are a couple of messages I've received over the last twenty-four hours, and some commentary

to help the reader should he find himself in the same place.

■ From **canmod19**:

Hi, my name's Rick, I'm a photographer looking for models for various photographic assignments. I'm wondering if you might be interested in modelling?

If you want to contact me about modelling please feel free to email me at: <—@hotmail.com>.

I'm also on MSN.

This guy is obviously some sort of freak. No sooner will you start "modelling" for this twisted pervert than you'll find yourself locked in his basement with only K-Y Jelly for sustenance and your photos being utilised for him to ensnare more innocent victims. Probably best to stay away.

■ From **davo1986**:

I'm hoping "Androgynous" isn't lik Monogomous! :-)
more pix dude? MSNmobile?

This guy is probably a little too intellectual for us. Note the clever use of an "emoticon" representing a smiling face. The misspellings also add an extra certain charm.

I suggest you send a photo completely different from the one on your profile and see how he reacts. I gave him Toby's number.

■ From **steve2009**:

mate nice look up in canberra on the weekend do you meet guys for discreet fun times if so message me cheers steve

No, this person is not some poor foreigner struggling with the Queen's English; it's a thirty-year-old from Batemans Bay. He lists his job as a manager, but that seems highly unlikely given he writes like an aneurysm patient.

"Discreet fun times" is probably the most intelligible, and yet



"No sooner will you start 'modelling' for this twisted pervert than you'll find yourself locked in his basement with nothing but K-Y Jelly for sustenance and your photos being utilised for him to ensnare more innocent victims. Probably best to stay away."

least appealing, part of that sentence.

■ From **deano.85:**

your hot. im in canberra 2nite
text me lol

No pretensions of romance here, or even the correct form of "you're". Looks like our ship's come in tonight! I'd message this man and tell him you're looking for a meaningful one night stand in the darkened alley just next to Cube.

■ From **pexaleoboy:**

Hi,

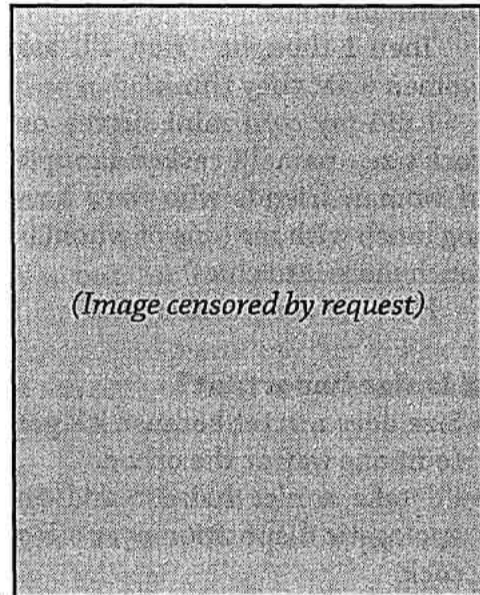
My name is Joel, im 35 slim build from Sydney but travel through your way a fair bit and saw your profile on Gaydar. Im not sure what to say in a first email but I enjoy camping hiking and photography and am currently doing my masters at university. I can send you a pic too if you wanted. If Im not your ideal type it would still be nice to be friends and correspond via email and maybe meet.

I have no idea how this system actually works as your one of the first people I have emailed so I have sent an email and msg as im not sure which is best. I think that's the way it works I haven't quite figured it out yet.

Nice try "Joel", but you have to get up pretty early in the morning to fool Matthew Rutherford P. Laing.

Of course he claims to be new, but it's obvious he's a desperado who's sunk to new lows of deceit-

fulness to get his share of wiener. "Haven't figured it out" indeed! Enjoys camping and hiking (read: he's a porky slob who plays World of Warcraft 19+ hours a day). If he's willing to travel from Sydney to Canberra for a rogering then you have to question his claims of "slim", "35" and "university".



(Image censored by request)

■ From **madboymatt:**

hey there mister! what r u up 2?
Matty

Important here isn't the message so much as the photo for his profile, and to a lesser extent the caption. He lists his occupation as risk management, but he must be pretty damn poor at his job to think that having that as your only photo is a one way ticket to poontang city. His profile also mentions (unsurprisingly) he has little or no body hair, yet it is clearly visible even on the small, slightly fuzzy photo provided.

In conclusion, gay internet dating is a many-splendoured thing. Although my fifty-four suitors were all complete duds, that doesn't mean you can't find true happiness on the internet. Go out there and spread forth your scandalous misrepresentations!

Here endeth the lesson. ■

Can you cook something?

Anything?

Write it down.

Send it to Foodbook 2006.

In second semester a cookbook will be published of all (edible) entries received.

Send your entry to foodbook2006@gmail.com.

There may be prizes. There may even be good ones.

Feedback 2006 is a joint project of the ANUSA and the UCSA.

Cock-a-doodle-do

Megan Leahy
.....

So... Is bigger better? Or is it just painful? Girth? Length? Does it really fucking matter? Or is sway more important? Is it all in the application?

Then I thought, "Hey, I'll ask women what they think."

I did my own mini-survey on cock size - namely, I asked a couple of woman friends who were having lunch with me (one of whom is much more into chics).

Here are their comments.

■ **Is size important?**

- Size does matter because it's got to fit one way or the other.
- I'd take a nice haircut and an apologetic disposition over a big cock.
- It's all about the angle.
- It lies in the girth.
- Yes.

■ **Does it really matter to women?**

- Didn't really matter that much to me - I changed teams.
- Length, yes.

■ **And how about: Are men more hung up on size than women?**

- Straight men seem to have more of an issue than gay men.
- Yes.

As you can see, I have enough here to write a thesis.

I watched a documentary the other night on SBS called *My Penis and I*. It was about a guy who was on the less-endowed end of the spectrum who decided to spend two years making a documentary about it.

Self indulgent? Yes. Understandable that social pressure may

have led him to obsess about it? Absolutely. The poor bugger hinted at sexual dysfunction issues and a reluctant first sexual experience because he was concerned about his size.

In the film he visits the set of a porn movie and had a good squiz at some male porn star cock - not the best people to make a comparison with.

This guy had been in a relationship for eight years with a woman who obviously loved him and had no issues with his pint-sized package. When he asked her if she would be happier if he was bigger, she replied "Yes" because it would make him happier (and perhaps then he would spend less time obsessing about his cock documentary and pay more attention to her).

By the end of the documentary, he'd learnt to embrace his small member.

It was a beautiful moment. Everyone had a bit of a sob. Very happy ending - after all, isn't that what cock is there for? To be enjoyed by everyone involved?

All this size hype leaves me feeling pretty sorry for blokes. They get a rough trot when it comes to penis size pressure when there's really nothing that can be done about it. It leads to excessive resource expenditure on unnecessary, albeit heart-warming, documentaries.

But the size of the female body needs also to be considered.

Vaginas aren't just holes that sit there. They need to be communicated with before you put anything in there - no matter how lean, long, or short. Surely as kids you all played that puzzle game where you quickly found that square shapes don't fit into trian-

gular holes.

You're probably all thinking, "What the Hell kind of sex has she had?", but I'm trying to make the point that sometimes things don't fit automatically and a little bit of manoeuvring never goes astray (READ: FOREPLAY!).

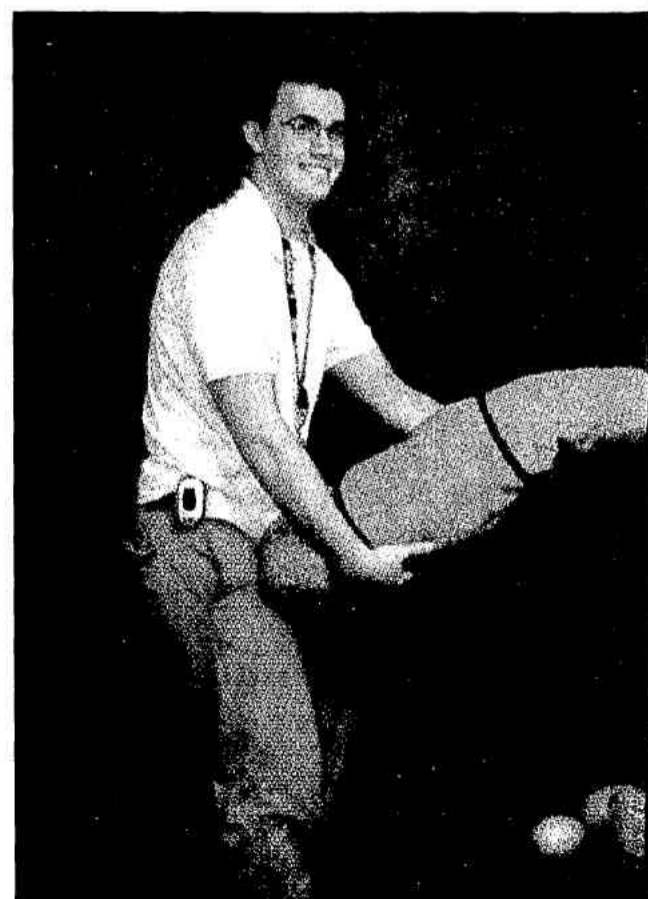
Read the *Kama Sutra* (or even a *Cosmo* sealed section); try out some different positions. These things may help to overcome numerous size issues experienced by both men and women.

However, while neither diminutive nor horse-like cocks are great, pleasure lies primarily in how it's being used and how comfortable you are with your partner. No matter how big or how small it is, "Jab, jab, jabbedy, jab" is not pleasant. (Jab.)

If, even after reading this highly academic analysis, you're a bloke who is still concerned about your peenie (doesn't that word make you feel like a man?) and you want to compensate, some friends of mine have provided handy hints:

- Hone up on your tongue skills.
- Learn to play the trumpet.
- Have a little box lunch at the Y.

These comments apply to all men, irrespective of schlong magnitude. ■





Here comes the g-word

Theodore Theodorus

Megan Leahy has embarked on a campaign to reclaim the word "cunt" from colloquial and inappropriate misogyny.

Her strategy is to use the word, with the utmost vigour, in its anatomical sense and deflate its intentional – no, I don't mean intentional – overexertions. A noble project.

I fear, only, that one day Ms Leahy will be sanctimoniously summoning up the reclaimed referent in front of a British hip-hop fan and will meet with the following answer:

"What, you mean proper cunt? As in, like, gash?"

That's right. Gash.

If you think I've made this word up, you overestimate the inventiveness of my baseness. No, I mean it.

The word is current parlance in the lower end of contemporary British culture. Perhaps I am stating the obvious and everybody knows this. But I only heard it recently. Gash. *Gash!* Good fucking Lord.

We're talking, of course, of people who might spend a "top bloody weekend pounding hole all night", people who might solicit you on the street to "Give us a tear at ya!"; but surely they've beaten themselves in the race to the bottom this time!

The term is repulsive. So repulsive it's brilliant.

I know this because I have myself participated in a creative think-tank to think of disgusting terms for female genitalia.

The best we could come up with was "giney". That was tongue-in-cheek mind you; "gash" is dead fucking serious. But even endowed with artistic license, "giney" is not really there, is it? Gash blows it out of the water. (I wrote that last sentence mostly for the sake of start-

ing a sentence with "gash blows".)

Once you recover from the revulsion, the term is actually a lot of fun.

It meets all the industry standards for new profanity. It rolls messily off the tongue, gathering saliva in the grossest fricatives. It fills in the standard four letters, one by haggard one. It silences opprobrium with shock.

It caters to the vast tapestry of misogyny, providing a nasty little phrase for every type. The violent misogynist might "thrash gash" tonight. Blunter types may prefer to "bash gash". The really abusive may "smash gash". The considerate misogynist will "pash gash". I'll leave who should "splash gash" up to your (presumably unwilling) imagination. But the true misogynist will only "trash gash".

Perhaps it's not so shocking. Perhaps I'm a closet conservative. But spending plenty of time with American frat boys who spend the beginning of every night out determining to "crush that" "hit that" or "plug that", I must confess that "gash" still got me.

The fact is, nobody does baseness like the British. You could almost picture the term sliding seamlessly into an updated Evelyn Waugh moment:

Jolly great beano tonight, I'd dare say.

Rather. And no shortage of gash for the thrashing either!

Oh dear, you really must watch your language.

But dear me, I say, it really gives the ladies rather a thrill to hear their gashes spoken of like that!

God help us all.

The only point I'm trying to make here is that, if Ms Leahy's intentions are genuine, she has work cut out for her that would make Sisyphus look a spoilt brat. For she intends to swim upstream against a torrent of filth whose creativity knows no bounds.

Frankly, the unimpeded thrust which is the contemporary misogyny industry is, to all appearances, boundless.

Its parthenogenetic* spontaneity would make creationists proud. Reclamationists might work overtime, but the cliffs of wretchedness in the human mind no man may fathom. Reclaim one may, but the territory one reclaims is not static but expanding on all sides into horizons of haggardness.

I wish Megan well. Really, I do. Until then, birds do it. Bees do it. Even educated fleas do it. So let's do it. Let's smash some hole. ■

* *Reproducing without a fertilised egg, common in certain arthropods.*



Caring for your vagina

As part of its court-ordered settlement after retailing cigarettes to toddlers, *Woroni* is pleased to provide some *useful* advice on vaginal health

Keira Paterson
.....

Warning: this article is not in any way the authority on vulvas, anatomy, sexual health or anything at all really. If you have any problems, or for more information, please see your doctor.

Umm, What's that bit called again? First things first: some vocabulary for those who don't remember PE classes.

There are so many different slang terms for it – cunt, dink, fanny, vagina, cooch, woo-woo, mut, pussy, pink bits, girly bits, lips, etc., etc., etc., so here are some real ones.

The *vagina* is the tunnel between the *uterus* (where foetuses are carried) and the outside world. The *labia* are the lips, and there are two sets... those fleshy ones on the outside, and the small ones underneath, called the inner and outer labia respectively.

When you want to refer to the whole package you use the term *vulva*. (Technically, I should have used this term for the title, but too many people still don't know the difference.) *Genitalia* includes the vulva and the breasts. Of course, these aren't all the terms – there are far too many too bother with here! – but these are enough to make the point that the most common word used to describe female genitalia in fact only refers to one small part.

Oh no, don't tell me she's gonna talk about... discharge!

Well, just a little bit. It's normal.

There, that wasn't so hard, was it? Think you can handle a little more? Read on. Basically, the internal parts of the vulva are self-cleaning. This is pretty cool if you think about it. (It's not the only part of the body that does this. Your ears are self-cleaning, too.)

Your internal parts have a very sensitive bacterial balance, and they maintain themselves by discharging a fluid from time to time. This fluid carries any unwanted stuff (pardon my jargon) out of the vulva. It varies in thickness, colour, and quantity, and of course everyone is different.

Occasionally this will change; it might become a different colour or have a different odour to normal. If this happens, don't panic – it can be a symptom of a health problem, but this isn't always the case. If you are worried, consult your doctor or gynaecologist.

PS: This discharge is also the "wetness" that lubricates the genitals to make sex comfortable and enjoyable (although more is created for this purpose), so don't give it such a bad rap, okay?

If you wouldn't put it in your ear/mouth/nose....

... Don't put it down there!

This is important for two reasons. The first was discussed above. Your vulva is self-cleaning, and as such doesn't really need much help besides the rinse it gets in the shower. Any chemicals or detergents introduced to the internal genitals could upset the bacterial balance and cause an infection.

The second is that the vulva is lined with what is called a mucus membrane. This is the same sort of stuff that lines the insides of your mouth and nose. It is different from skin, and can be much more sensitive to chemicals and detergents (and pretty much anything else) than skin, so if it comes into contact with these, there may be some irritation.

With these two things in mind, it is easy to see why douching (the washing of the inside of the vulva and the vagina) is unnecessary, and can be harmful.

Obviously, lubricant intended for the genitals (sometimes it pays to check the packet to make sure this was the intention) and other sex products (again, check the packet) are okay, as is anything prescribed to you by a doctor, or sold to you by a pharmacist with the vulva in mind.

Health stuff

You've heard it before, and you'll hear it again, but I'm gonna say it anyway.

Get a pap test!

Get it now, and continue to have them regularly every two years. This is VERY important.

A cervical cancer screen, most commonly known as a pap test, may save your life. The procedure is very simple. Your doctor will scrape some sample cells from your cervix (probably by holding your vaginal walls open with a speculum). This sample is sent away to be tested for any abnormal cells or any changes in the cervix.

It's not a diagnostic test – that



is, if there are abnormal cells, you will have to go through more testing to find the problem. Nonetheless, it is the first and most common way to find cervical cancer before it is too late. It's not exactly fun, and it can be awkward, embarrassing, and strange, but it is a very important procedure.

When you do get a pap test (or pap smear), it's okay for you to tell the doctor how you feel, and to ask to stop the procedure at any time.

Ask any questions you have about the procedure before hand or during, and you have the right to get undressed privately (to ask to be behind a curtain, for example) and to choose your doctor (at the time of making the appointment).

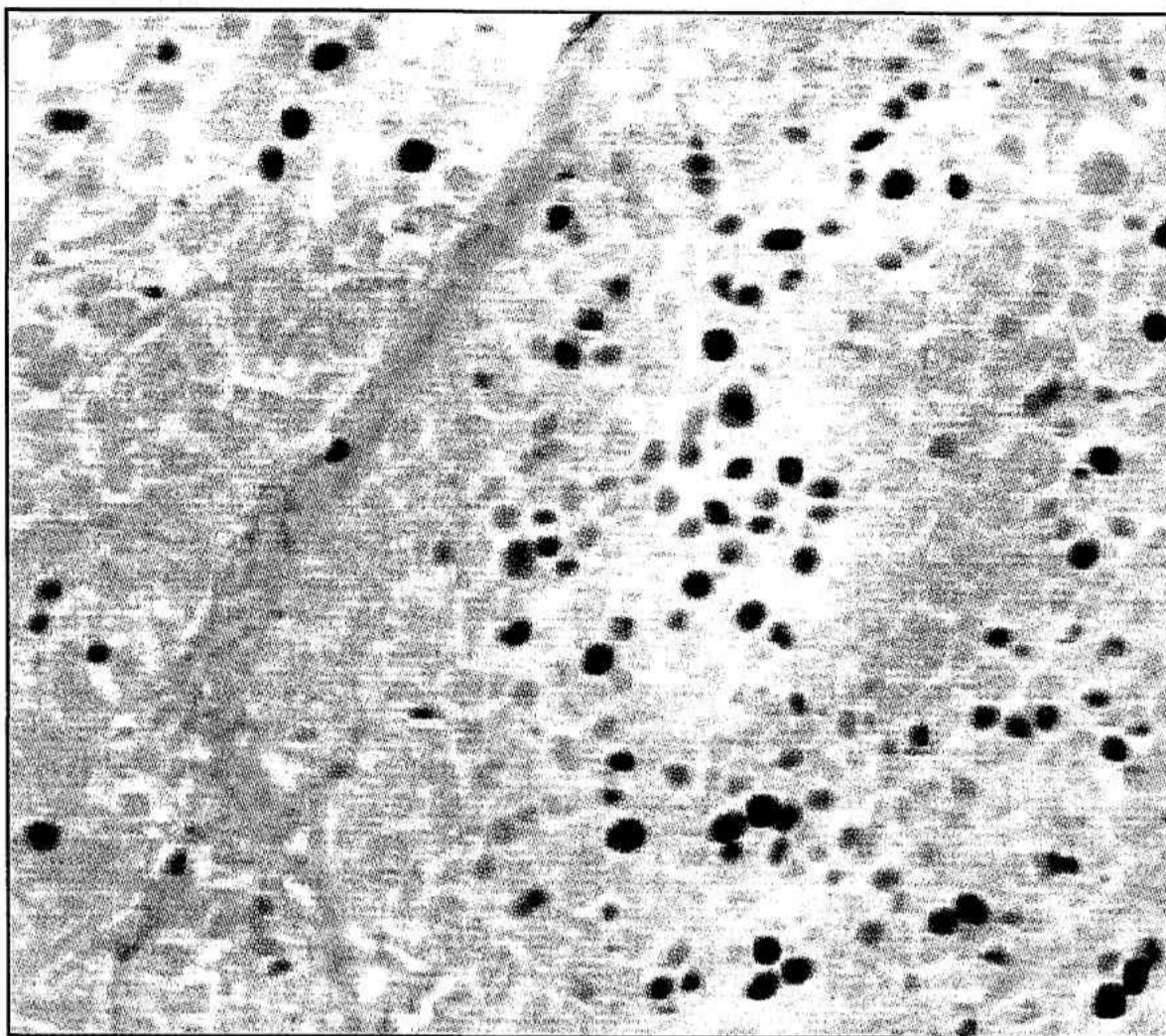
This is just like any medical procedure. Most doctors will go through the process with you before it starts, and will have no problems answering questions.

There are a good deal of other vulva health issues, such as sexually transmitted infections (STIs), yeast and other infections, and menstruation, which I don't really have the space to get into here. Suffice it to say that most women will encounter the odd problem or infection from time to time, and the best thing is to see you doctor and get it treated ASAP.

Everybody's unique

And in this particular case, everybody (and every body) is.

It is not at all uncommon to hear that someone has one lip longer than the other, or to find that one vagina is short and straight, and another is long and curved. Some have lots of hair, some don't, some have very small labia, some have very large or very dangly labia, some have very large round clitorises, some have small,



Above Regular pap tests can detect cancer way before you would become aware of it

flat ones.

No two are alike, a bit like snowflakes, except they usually aren't cold and they don't fall from the sky. So don't freak out if it doesn't look the same as the ones in your little brother's porn (and it probably won't, because most porn is doctored, but that's another issue entirely).

The last gasp

Finally, there is smell.

All vulvas smell, and they all smell different. Some people like the smell, some don't. It is normal, and many a lover will actually find your particular smell sexy.

If it begins to smell very unpleasant, fishy, or yeasty, see your doctor, because this could

be a sign of infection. Other than that, don't worry.

So that's it for today! For those few who bothered/managed to stick it out to the end, thank you very much, and I hope it was worth it. Go out and enjoy! ■

For more information check out the websites and health centres below.

- <www.thebigvagina.com> (my favourite)
- <www.healthywomen.org>
- ANU Health Service - ph: 6125 3598
- Sexual Health and Family Planning ACT <www.shfpact.org.au>
- <www.uottawa.ca/health/information/women-infections.html>

Sexual Privacy

If Dorothy had a choice, she wouldn't go back to Kansas. I know this because Dorothy seems like the kind of girl who likes a good time and, being less than sixteen years old, she is in possession of at least two qualities which have not been greatly welcomed in Kansas of late.

I refer, in particular, to a 2003 legal opinion of Kansas Attorney-General Phill Kline. Kline suggested that a Kansas child abuse reporting law required the reporting of most sexual activity by children under the age of sixteen by health-care professionals. That's right: Joe and Betsy-Jane's confused fumbling had to be reported to the authorities. The point wasn't so much to let Joe know he was about half an inch to the right of where he should have been, but rather to prevent (in a convoluted and nonsensical manner) abortions.

In one of the few instances of sanity prevailing in the US, a federal judge recently ruled that Kline's opinion was inconsistent with the law on which it was supposedly based. Healthcare professionals, reproductive rights groups, and Joe and Betsy-Jane all breathed a sigh of relief, and Kansas returned as close to normal as it ever was.

A complex problem

It's worth being worried about the intrusion of the state into our sex lives. The fight for even the most modest gay rights continues, as do battles for the transgender rights and just about anyone who doesn't fit into a narrow conception of what someone, somewhere, decides is "normal". We're still led by those who believe the state should be just small enough to fit into our bedrooms. And on behalf of those misguided zealots, the proud state of Kansas is leading the charge.

Yet the petty scuffle in Kansas was not the war that is to be fought and won; in fact, it barely rates as a battle.

Issues of sexual privacy, particularly among children, are messy affairs which occur quietly in doctors' surgeries, with neither the interest nor oversight of federal judges. They are rarely conflicts with clear victors, nor do they even have clear participants.

The tangle of parents, doctors and children's interests tend not to be public, and very rarely do they benefit from screaming matches about "rights".

The trials of 'Jenny'

Consider this: Jenny has started having sex and is 14 years old. She has asked her doctor to prescribe her the contraceptive pill, but she doesn't want her parents to know.

Her parents are conservative and would prefer their daughter not to have sex until marriage, and probably only once or twice after that. What does a doctor do?

There are no consistent laws in Australia on whether or not the doctor can conceal the information from the parents.

Often they can, when they consider the child a "mature minor". But sometimes, they cannot. The tightrope of disclosure can be a difficult one to walk, and little comfort can be gained from the fact that the lawyers are often those who make the ultimate decision.

But this article isn't about the plight of doctors. They get paid the big bucks for exactly these reasons (and professional indemnity insurance helps, too). No, this article is about the facts of life, the birds and the bees, what happens when mummy and daddy love each other very much. This article is like an

THESE'S JUMETAILS
QUEER IN KANSAS

Pat Delaney



HO, HO, HO!

insurance commercial playing in reverse – it's about you, ten years ago. It is about teen sex.

Teenagers think a great deal about sex. The classic rule – that a man thinks about sex every seven seconds – is clearly a lifelong average that arises out of a solid pubescent foundation. Without the nineties *Baywatch* marathons and frequent repeats of *Basic Instinct*, I'm sure the average would be vastly different.

While for the most part, we can reflect on the humour of the situation – the books held delicately in front of the body, the awkward moments at the swimming carnival – there is a serious side.

Letting your parents in on your sex life

For many people, sex is an intensely personal experience. Even for those for whom it is not, their sex lives are still not generally something they wish disclosed to just anybody. For almost everybody, the idea of their parents knowing any intimate details about their sex life is as frightening as knowing intimate details about their parents' sex life.

This concern goes well beyond the pedestrian paranoia that your girlfriend is talking about your pe-

nis size behind your back. It goes beyond even concerns that the Kansas government might have heard you fingered Mary-Lou in the movie theatre when you were fifteen.

This is a question about the rights you have against the most powerful figures in your teenage life: your parents.

The day I realised Santa didn't exist was a difficult day. More difficult though, was earlier than that, when I realised that Santa knew when I'd been naughty or nice was because my parents had been spying on me and passing on the information.

The tyranny of the state is nothing compared to the tyranny of the parent, and worse still is when the two coalesce. It is time that some sexual privacy is granted to teenagers.

Right to know, duty to inform

At the very least a little information wouldn't hurt. In fact, there were years when even a clear diagram would have been a godsend.

Nothing could be worse than misconceived information programs by well-meaning governmental agencies. Take, for example, the program of text messaging of sex information to teenagers.

Granted, they have the best intentions, but I'm not sure that teenage boys with doubts about their sexuality would benefit greatly from this pearl of wisdom:

it's nrm1 4 some boyz/boyz + girlz/girlz. or u may not know who ur attracted 2.

Thanks Grandpa, when you text like a 12 year old, the information seems so much cooler.

Still, it's clearly time for change.

For parents, a little sensitivity might be overdue. Little Johnny isn't as little as he used to be, and it's probably time to start knocking before you enter his room.

For the state, it is high-time that it withdrew from bedrooms anywhere. A truly liberal state will recognise that it must maximise choice for all its citizens. This includes teenagers as much as any others.

Moreover, genuine choice can hardly be secured by substituting the judgement of the state for the judgement of the parent.

Kids grow up young, and they deserve to be able to make their own decisions, including decisions about sex.

Most importantly, they deserve to be able to do so with at least a modicum of respect and privacy, even in Kansas. ■



My part in an Amsterdam sex show

Patrick Moody
.....

Amsterdam is a city known, for better or worse, for two things: marijuana and sex.

Given I'm writing this for *Woroni*, I don't think I need to go into a detailed description of what happened when I ate a seemingly normal pastry that turned out to be anything but. However, whilst I suspect that many people reading this have actually engaged in sex (except whoever writes ANU Student Watch), there's nothing quite like watching, and being involved in, a genuine live Amsterdam sex show.

Yes, I said "involved in". I actually participated in part of an Amsterdam sex show. Which is part of the "charm" of the event.

Before I go into the gory details of the audience participation sections, I have to emphasise that this is far from being the dodgy peep shows you would see at a Club x. The "Pink Elephant" show, regarded as the biggest and best of the Amsterdam sex show scene, takes place in a renovated theatre, so there are three hundred or so people watching one or more "performers" get it on, on stage.

The audience is not quite the stereotype you would think: a sea of dodgy old men in trenchcoats sprinkled with the occasional stoned Dutch equivalent of a John's boy there for a laugh.

The crowd was a very mixed bunch. In the row in front of me was a pair of female college professors from Indiana, behind me an old married couple from Yorkshire; this was mostly representative of the crowd.

There were, naturally, the occasional dodgy type, like the bloke in the very front row who was a dead ringer for Woody Allen and kept his coat suspiciously cover-

ing his lap for the whole show, but, surprisingly, that type seemed to be in the minority.

Okay, everyone - now we get messy

The show, from the two hours I saw of it, consists of about eight or nine performers, and consists of numerous "acts". The show runs constantly from about 2 p.m. until "late" (usually defined by what day of the week it is), and the audience wanders in and out throughout the entire show.

When the group I was with arrived, the act on stage consisted of a slightly rotund black guy, dressed in what appeared to be an eight-year-old's Batman outfit (the faded grey t-shirt and crappy plastic bat ears), basically screwing an old, very underweight Dutch woman... all to the VERY tasteless music selection of "Knocking on Heaven's Door".

Then the circular section of the stage they were on was raised and began to rotate. This it seemed, was par for the course, if anything, it was rather tame for the Amsterdam scene.

Where it gets interesting is when they ask for audience participation. As alluded to above, I, thanks to the many glasses of Heineken I had had to that point,

reluctantly agreed. I was fortunate - all I had to do was dance with a naked middle-aged woman and then take a bite from a banana she happened to have inserted into her vagina.

How is this in any way fortunate? Well, compare that to my companion Jean-Francois, who, upon being escorted up on stage, proceeded to be stripped naked, lain on the floor, and made to pull a string of beads out of this somewhat unappealing woman with his teeth.

No one, Jean-Francois included, was surprised when the girls of the group weren't too keen on his amorous intentions for the remainder of the tour.

I went into the show with some perhaps unreasonably optimistic expectations. I expected some element of eroticism, some attempt at artistry, or at least something to make it more worthwhile than a subscription to a porn site.

To the Pink Elephant, you failed to meet any of my expectations. To anyone thinking of attending the Pink Elephant, or anything like it in the fair city of Amsterdam, I would suggest that you stick to the pot and buy some porn. At least then there is no chance of getting naked and frisky with an old crusty man or woman in front of a crowd. ■

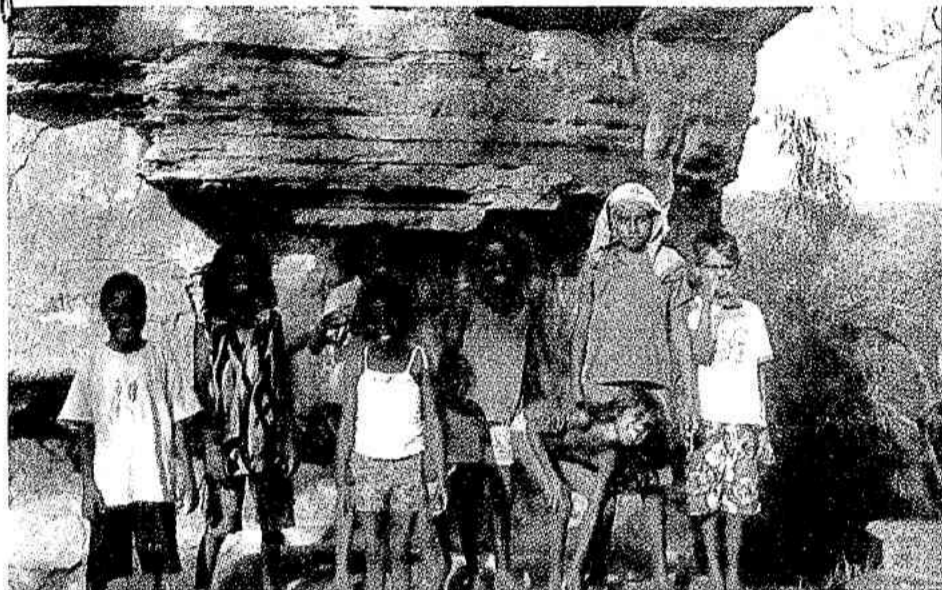


Amsterdam's red light district

MELANIE POOLE

Oenpelli, NT

Beauty and suffering in Arnhem Land



Aboriginal Australia suffers pervasive domestic violence.

Addiction, compounded by the difficulty of getting effective intervention, makes the problem seem intractable – but Melanie Poole finds there is hope and help.

It is a humid 39°C, the height of the wet season. The smell of baked mud is pervasive. The sun reverberates off corrugated tin shacks, as residents flock to the nearest waterhole. Emaciated dogs forage in rubbish bins and flattened cane toads line the burnt-orange road.

Welcome to Oenpelli in north-east Arnhem Land, NT: population 745.

This was my first visit to a remote Aboriginal community. A 21-year-old “southerner”, my knowledge of the far north stretched scarcely beyond the trickle of sensationalised events reported by mainstream media. I hoped for an eye-opening experience.

I was visiting Oenpelli with a women’s legal service, hoping to develop the textbook knowledge one acquires through studying Arts/Law.

We had arrived in time for “Bush Court” – a circuitous court which involves magistrates and lawyers traveling to isolated communities. We were there to assist women in a variety of legal matters, mostly concerning domestic violence.

The spectre of violence

Domestic violence is endemic in Aboriginal communities.

According to the HREOC 2003 Social Justice Report, indigenous women are up to 45 times more likely to suffer domestic violence than non-indigenous women.

The reasons are manifold. In essence, domestic

violence increases in any demographic experiencing high rates of drug and alcohol abuse, unemployment and incarceration. Add to this the traumatic aftermath of genocide; and it is of little wonder that such a situation has developed.

Domestic violence is frequently preceded by petrol-sniffing or alcohol consumption. Some women sought orders that prohibited their husbands coming home after drinking or petrol-sniffing, as it was only then that they experienced violence. In some cases, a lack of mental health treatment had precipitated the abuse.

This latter situation was apparent in the case of a client, Paula (name changed to protect privacy). Her son had committed suicide the previous year. No counselling had been available to her family. Her husband and younger son, who blamed her for the suicide, were inflicting violence on her in their attempts to deal with their grief. Paula had developed acute feelings of guilt and was contemplating her own suicide.

We arranged for her to be transported to a Darwin refuge where she could receive counselling. When she informed her family, her younger son threatened suicide if she left. Paula, naturally vulnerable to such a threat, was trapped.

Paula’s case exposes the gaping lack of mental health care in remote communities. Lawyers, magistrates, and police officers form a regular stream, but support workers are scarce. The courts are overwhelmed with cases where the real issue was not the



◀ criminal behaviour, but rather the psychological and social reasons behind it – issues the courts are neither created nor equipped to deal with. One lawyer commented: “I should have studied social work at uni. It would have been more relevant to what I’m doing here.”

Addressing domestic violence within Aboriginal communities requires a different approach from within Western society.

As a magistrate sitting on the Bush Court told me:

“In the Western legal system, the usual goal is to remove the woman from the situation – often via a no-contact restraining order. This is rarely possible in Aboriginal communities, where the woman will be blamed for dividing the family.”

Responses

Communities are small and close-knit; it is generally unrealistic for a woman to relocate to somewhere she has no family support. Consequently, most women seek “no violence” orders, which allow co-habitation but forbid violence. This typically has little practical effect, but is symbolically important. It helps to empower women

and engenders dialogue about acceptable behaviour.

In some communities, women have secured funding for “night patrol” groups. These resilient women monitor the community by night in a four-wheel drive, disrupting violent situations to remove the woman to the police or a safe house.

“Aunty Rose”, a highly respected elder, who runs a night patrol group in her community, commented, however, that these measures are not an enduring solution.

“The men need to be educated – that’s the next step. The anger-management courses aren’t working because... [the men] don’t take them seriously. We need carefully planned perpetrator programs.”

The predicament confronting remote communities can be confounding. There is no itemised list of problems, but rather a densely woven web. Domestic violence has a correlative relationship with petrol sniffing and alcoholism. These, in turn, are linked to school retention and employment rates. Ultimately, we must somehow address the devastation resulting from two centuries of systemic cultural destruction.

The isolation of Aboriginal communities, and the multi-faceted nature of the problems engulfing them, often elicits the “out of sight, out of mind” mentality.

It is no exaggeration to say that these communities endure third world conditions. I was reminded of my time living with desperately poor communities in Africa, rather than any experiences of my life in Australia. Children die from illnesses related to scabies – a disease that non-indigenous society has not struggled with since Captain Cook’s day. Life expectancy is twenty years below that of non-indigenous people. Suicide rates are at least 40% higher than that of non-indigenous people, according to the National Advisory Council for Youth Suicide Prevention.

In reality, however, what is out of sight is never out of mind. The situation fundamentally disgraces the entire nation. Australia cannot progress meaningfully if conditions in Aboriginal communities do not improve. I learnt not to underestimate the impact of small steps. Where sweeping solutions do not exist we can work toward them – untangling the web one strand at a time. What is important is to focus on empowering communities and achieving reconciliation as the end goal. Paternalistic measures (such as enforcing dry communities, or introducing non-sniffable fuel) can be effective in the short term, but are ultimately band-aid solutions.

The first step must surely be to acknowledge the reality of the past and its impact on the present.

To quote Senator Aden Ridgeway, who spoke recently about the importance of saying sorry: “Saying sorry validates and affirms these people’s stories. It then opens the way for personal healing to occur so that people may put some parts of their lives back together especially... learning about their lost culture.”

My studies in Law would lead





me to think that the next important step would be efforts toward reparation. It is the most basic principle of our civil law system that, when a wrong is committed, efforts should be made to put the victim in the situation they were in before the wrong occurred. Where this is impossible, appropriate reparations should be made. We acknowledge these principles as representing our most fundamental rights.

A rich heritage and culture

I must mention a very bright side to life in a remote community.

Oenpelli's surroundings are breathtaking. Mountain caves, in which ancient rock art has been preserved, look over miles of wetlands, interspersed with native bush. To my delight, I received an

invitation to join a group of women and children for a swim one afternoon. On the way to the rockhole, the children sang vociferously in Kunwinjku. They explained the significance of each landmark, telling me about dreamtime characters who shaped the environment. When we played "spot the croc", their sightings were instantaneous.

The Oenpelli children were seemingly some of the happiest I have ever encountered. Yet I couldn't stop the litany of statistics rolling through my mind – theoretically, a substantial portion of these children would experience sexual or physical abuse, serious health problems, incarceration, depression... the list goes on.

Oenpelli was suddenly a place of both immense wonder and immense suffering. As one of the

aunties said to me: "People forget the good things, like pride... [in] knowing about the land. The *kunbang** makes people forget... but there are so many important things... to teach and share."

It struck me that, much as our shameful history and the suffering caused by it detracts from us all, there also is much that we can all gain. We might not be able to see the path to reconciliation clearly, or know exactly what to do, but if we head in the right direction we will get there.

This could not be better illustrated than by an Aboriginal proverb: "Traveller, there are no paths. Paths are made by walking." ■

* *Kunbung* is a word which traditionally meant anything that harms the spirit, but which now is commonly used to refer to alcohol.

Why REAL economists don't pull chics

Svi Gribov

.....
A long time ago Paul Chen dropped a \$5 note onto the steps of MCC T1.

Having been sent outside earlier, five guys were asked to walk back into the lecture theatre and a great social experiment was about to unfold before the students' eyes. One, two, three... they all walked straight past the money. The fourth, too, strolled past, ignorant of the fortune at his feet.

The last guy however, saw the note, picked it up and held it aloft, marveling at his good fortune. Sadly, the joke was on him because everyone in the lecture theatre laughed. (Personally, I have always thought that anyone who actually picks up the note in this oft-repeated experiment is a cheap bastard, but maybe I am just bitter about not getting five bucks.)

Microeconomics 1 teaches you that there is no point in picking up this money. Why? Well, the Efficient Market Hypothesis, or EMH, argues that if it really was a \$5 note and not merely a purple piece of paper with Her Maj on it, then someone far wiser and more punctual than you will have already picked it up and enjoyed a high quality chocolate milkshake with extra malt as a result.

These blessed people, presumably French and known as "arbitrageurs", roam the earth seeking out freebies at your expense, thus ensuring the efficiency of the market. Among the masses, this issue does not cause great consternation because usually we are talking about some banker in Sydney, with too much hair product, glued to a computer screen watching frozen concentrated orange juice futures prices tick over.

I put it to you, however, that the EMH weaves its ugly head into one of the most important aspects of our lives.

I am talking, of course, about the problem most guys (and

girls?) face on a daily basis - picking up. Picture this: you and I are sitting outside a café watching the "scenery" passing by. You say to me, "That girl is not wearing a bra!" to which I reply "Yes, she is attractive... too bad she's taken." Amazed by my apparent knowledge of some random girl's relationship status you quickly move on and start seeking out your next potential spouse.

Let me tell you, your search is rendered pointless by a subset of the Efficient Market Hypothesis that I have discovered. I have dubbed this, predictably (I am an Actuarial Studies student, after all), the Efficient Dating Hypothesis. It states that any attractive girl (or guy in the interests of gender equality) is either already taken or of unsavoury character, just like the aforementioned \$5 bill.

As is the case with any groundbreaking theory, and here I cite heliocentrism, a spherical Earth and creationism (just joking!), it was initially met with ridicule, defamation of character and persecution. Like those trying to defend the principles of communism, my friends put forth theoretically possible but highly suspect arguments using slogans such as "don't be so shallow", "be confident and charming", and "from each according to their means, to each according to their needs" (sorry...).

Rubbish. As FHM clearly demonstrates, hot girls only date other hot girls (winner!) or the ever-elusive "genuine guy". Quite obviously then, any hot girl you see

Below Never pick up a \$5 note, and never accept cheap Polish vodka



on the street is already involved with someone (not you) and the Efficient Dating Hypothesis holds, QED.

I leave you with this interpretation of Matthew 5:5:

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the beautiful people."

Remember, though, while you are waiting for your turn to walk through the pearly gates and into the embrace of Jessica Alba, that bloke with too much hair product is dating your future wife (husband?). The Revolution is coming, comrades. ■

The federal Education Minister

Jeremy Farrell interviews Julie Bishop as she gets into her new Cabinet role

WORONI *What are your priorities going to be during your tenure as education minister?*

BISHOP In higher education, I want to see the sector develop greater diversity, focusing on excellence in research through the research quality framework, [both] in teaching and in our graduates.

There is a tendency for universities to try to be all things to all people, rather than focus on their strengths. Measures such as FEE-HELP introduce greater competition into the sector and support students who are seeking the best quality education possible in the public or private sectors.

Universities should work together to become more efficient and to reduce duplication.

W *It looks increasingly likely that several more institutions will be forced to hand back federal funding because they can't pull in enough students. Are students being deterred by the fact that HECS fees have jumped by almost 75% in the decade since the Liberals won power?*

B There are more students currently at university than at any time in our history – almost one million students.

Some universities appear at this stage to be unable to fill the places they have sought and been allocated by the Australian Government. None has yet made a formal approach to hand back places.

A university may retain its funding if the places which are unfilled are less than 1% of its load. If unfilled places exceed 1%, discussions would commence with regard to funding and the return of unfilled places to the Australian Government. These places can then be allocated to other universities which may be experiencing strong demand.

W *For the past ten years, Common-*

wealth funding of universities has failed to keep up with staff wages. So far universities have been trying to plug this gap by enrolling full-fee-paying overseas students, but it seems this market is tightening up as overseas markets, particularly Asia, create their own reputable higher education sectors. How will Australian universities combat this drop-off, if not through increased funding from the federal government?

B While the growth in international students has declined in recent years, the market continues to grow. The international higher education market is worth more than \$7.5 billion to the Australian economy each year, and is our fourth largest export sector.

The higher education sector will receive an additional \$11 billion from the Australian Government over the next decade.

W *Are you considering allowing universities to set their own HECS fees?*

B Universities are already able to set their own student contributions (previously known as HECS) to between 0% and 25% more than the 2004 HECS levels in all disciplines, except for education and nursing, in which no increase is permitted (other than indexation).

W *Labor will go into the next election opposing full fee-paying degrees at Australian universities. What is your response to that position?*

B I believe in choice, and providing opportunities to people seeking a university education.

Full fee-paying places mean students are no longer forced into their second, third or fourth preferences if they miss out on a Commonwealth supported place – they can choose to take up a full fee-paying place in their preferred course.

These students may have the option of moving into Commonwealth-supported places in later years, often

taking the place of a Commonwealth-supported student who has moved to another course or withdrawn.

Full fee-paying places are in addition to Commonwealth supported places.

W *The government has criticised the levying of compulsory student union fees by arguing service provider institutions that accept public money ought not to charge extra for those essential services. Doesn't that policy contradict current government policies towards private schools and medical schemes?*

B Students attend university for an education. Currently, 34% of students are part time, and 41% are mature aged (aged 25 and over). If students wish to participate in clubs and societies and to utilise other non-academic services or facilities, they will be free to do so.

However, the Government is strongly opposed to compelling students to pay for services they may not want or use. If they want or use them, they will be willing to pay for them – voluntarily.

W *What do you see as the role for student unions/associations at universities under VSU?*

B The Australian Government is not opposed to student organisations. Students are, and should be, free to organise and develop representative structures and undertake advocacy on behalf of other students.

Student organisations will always be free to recruit members and offer services to students. Organisations which offer services valued by students will continue to attract student membership and funding.

The quality of life on campus for students will be enhanced by students having a choice about how they spend the money that would have been used previously for the compulsory fee.

Alex Douglas asks whether our obsession with practicality is very, well, practical

Practical

Australia, in recent culture, has celebrated itself incessantly as a nation of practical people.

Who is the archetypal Australian? The ordinary bloke, living off the land. About a century ago. Nobody living in this country can be unaware of this insidious value judgment: Australia is about practicality, down-to-earthness, and simplicity. Thought, complexity, and depth are un-Australian, at best airy-fairy and at worst a species of un-yakka whinging that heaps shame on our ANZAC ancestors.

This value judgment is one of things I have never understood and will never understand about Australians. Headbutting somebody in a bar brawl is practical; singing in an opera is not. Building guns is practical; joining the priesthood is not.

What inherent value does practicality have? Yet the judgment is everywhere. Academics are increasingly harassed to teach practical skills; that is to say, skills with some economic benefit, but not too much, and not too long-term. Skills to survive in the current knowledge economy, yes, very good, very Aussie. Innovation, no – too much like art, you see. And, God forbid, if one were to gener-

ate too much wealth, we wouldn't have anything to be yakka about.

A philosophical argument

Peter Singer made philosophy Aussie when he called his book *Practical Ethics*, a consequence of which I doubt he was unaware.

Back when I did forestry I was told that philosophy is a "load of crap" by somebody who "knew how to put the old axe in the trunk". Don't get me wrong. I'm glad somebody does know how to put the old axe in the trunk. Trunks are everywhere, some apparently in need of the old axe.

The need for philosophy is less obvious. And yet one must admit that the world has changed a great deal since practical skills were of paramount importance. My grandfather worked with his hands. I'm sure almost all our grandfathers worked with their hands. Many of our fathers worked with their hands. There is nothing at all ignoble about that. Anybody who disdains manual labour simply hasn't tried to do it for an extended period.

Psychologists who tell us how hard we work today compared with past generations need to look up the word "work" in a diction-

ary. At the same time, more than one economist has recently pointed out that anybody who has done manual labour for an extended period of time cannot be indifferent to its gradual elimination.

It is eliminated, one must remember, by the transition to mentalwork. I admire my grandfather's and grandmother's generation beyond my comprehension of it. Their struggles I cannot imagine. And yet, if asked, I have no doubt that they would say that they did what they did because they had to, because they wanted a better life for their children, or because it was the way things were.

They would not say they did it for the sake of being Aussie and practical. Their major problem was putting food on the table. Ours are different: maintaining our ability to think in an era of consumerism, protecting our autonomy in a world of coordinated industrial planning, salvaging our rights from legal and political forms which have fallen into decadence.

A culture of greedy

Times have changed, and Australia is not exempt from time, whatever the Howard government might say.



values

But there are so many problems in the world! Mustn't we knuckle down and get amongst it, and not fiddle while Rome burns? Answer: Are there problems in the world? Or are there problems in us?

Take hunger. Henri Bergson once wrote that man's great triumph in the Industrial Revolution was to extend the powers of his physical body; his great failing was that the body quickly outgrew its soul. This was his overarching diagnosis of global hunger.

Even today, with all the available information in the world, I still have conversations with people who believe that poverty in the world is caused by scarcity. The other day somebody said to me that the issue was "scarcity of capital". Scarcity of capital? I'm not even sure what that means. Isn't it like saying $2x$ is limited by scarcity of x ? Scarcity of resources, perhaps. But not for a long time. I consume the resources of something like eighty Ugandans.

Plenty of Ugandans live on their share. I am equivalent in biological need to a Ugandan. The maths is not complex. The issue is that I am not psychologically or sociologically equivalent.

We don't change the way we live. Not overnight, and not without changing a lot of other things about the way we think.

Worldwide hunger is not as simple as scarcity, not when so many have so much surplus. We have thought our way into worldwide hunger; the way out of it is a change in thinking.

There are genuine obstacles, but they are not mere simple prac-

tical problems like problems of engineering or econometrics. These are issues of how we live, how we must live, and how we determine this. It is, as Bergson says, a task for the collective human spirit and not its body that we face.

There is not a clear practical problem before us like something from MacGyver, not a preformed opportunity waiting for some sport to have a go. The problem itself is hazy and shapeless; we are still in the abstract realm of posing problems and not in the practical world of finding solutions.

Low demand for thinking

But don't we think too much? That's very hard to say. We think a lot, certainly, if thinking is mere mental activity. Ford can release a new car and make a good estimate of how many people will buy it, based on pricing and marketing.

Those buyers could be said to be thinking, in an engineered sense. A political candidate, spending a fortune on campaigning and activating all the attractors of racism on particular and largely irrelevant border issues could be said to have stimulated thought, if incurred dogmatism is thought.

But we could define thinking differently. Or perhaps the person who claims that we think too much is speaking of academics: cycling theories amongst themselves, speaking in self-infected jargon to one another, remaining unintelligible to everyone else, and sealing the educational estate off from political and sociological influence.

And yet the problem goes two ways.

I am a fool to write a piece of computer software that nobody will be bothered to learn how to use and then complain that people

don't want software. But there is also the chance that people really don't want software.

If the general population does not seem to have any interest in thinking, then there is a demand-side problem, not only a surplus in supply. Academics think too much, but only relatively to the dearth of interest in thinking outside the academic establishment. Demand, as my Ford example implies, can be engineered, and academics might be accused of not using their thinking to exert the proper influence and remaining too comfortable in the ivory tower. Perhaps Rapunzel should let down her hair, but she had better be sure that someone will climb rather than pull her down.

Regardless, there is no issue of thinking too much; as with hunger, it is all a matter of distribution. Our issue the topology, not the sociology.

This is only the most general and vague plea for thinking, going along with the admittedly admirable practical capacities of Australians.

It might not be my place to level these claims, but I think it's worthwhile to remember.

To use one last metaphor: you might admire a person with a charming accent, one which evokes so strongly a place and a history. But the person is not speaking simply to show off an evocative accent. Likewise, Australia might forever evoke a headstrong and sturdy rural culture. Even if the history thereof is whitewashed, the values are certainly real, and I don't mean to disagree with them.

But Australia does not exist simply to evoke those values.

One finds what one is about to become what one is; one is not about something merely to avoid insecurity. ■



I'll write this headline later...

Celia Winnett explores the perils of procrastination. Why do we do it, is there any benefit, and can we stop?

It's 1:45 a.m. on a crisp Tuesday morning, and I'm a quarter of the way through a research essay that's due on Wednesday.

At this stage in the game, it's safe to say I'm pushing my luck a little. And yet, in the last two hours, I have checked my email 16 times (any minute now...), walked to and from the fridge about a dozen times, and sat staring blankly at my computer screen for 29 minutes straight. What on earth is wrong with me?

A common ailment

Diseased though I may seem, I'm not alone in my plight (although I'm one of the relative few to reach the dizzying height of writing an article for *Woroni* just to avoid completing assessment).

Procrastination seems to be a pastime that is as prolific as it is stupid. In a recent poll (of my friends – I'm not quite so maladjusted as to waste time ringing up random members of the ANU stu-

dent body), over 90% admitted to engaging regularly in useless activities in a bid to escape the pain associated with learning. (The remaining 10% were working ridiculously long hours and counted eating and breathing as procrastination, so they don't deserve our scorn.)

Whether your poison be email-checking, rabid cleaning, or making little origami paper cranes, you share an attitude problem with thousands of students around the world: any pursuit that is irrelevant to attaining your degree is immeasurably worthwhile.

Is it really that bad?

So – why do so many of us malcontents feel such an all-consuming urge to destroy our chances of academic success? Is this student plague the epitome of Tall Poppy Syndrome, or just the mark of endemic laziness?

To be honest, I think it's actually common sense. Uni work is arduous, thankless, and emotionally draining. If you reckon sitting through a lecture doesn't do much for your general wellbeing, just think about studying for an exam – it actually kills endorphins.

In trying to stave off that essential reading or obliterate all memory of that upcoming assignment, your average student

is following all basic instincts of self-preservation. Reading *Cosmo* just before a tute is as healthy as brushing your teeth.

In my short experience, however, I'd say that problems arise when procrastination becomes a full-time job.

If you spend every contact hour engrossed in the woes of Paris Hilton and Lindsay Lohan on *ninemsn.com*, you're teetering a little close to the brink. Even in this age of rampant study avoidance, there's a difference between a fortifying dose of *Home and Away* before an exam, and a blurry semester of beer, LAN games and Foxtel before the arrival of a curt letter from the ANU's Student and Academic Services. Besides, I'm no wordsmith, but if "procrastination" means "putting off doing important things", you fall pretty severely outside the box if you never do anything important at all.

Don't despair!

So, at 2:20 a.m., as I stand paradoxically on my soapbox and whittle away my chances of achieving greatness, my point is this: procrastination, like drinking, should be performed in moderation.

Clean out the fridge, count your paperclips or do your nails if you need a boost, but stick a big yellow post-it note on your computer screen that says, "You've had your fun; now, back to work!" (I just did.)

With this approach, maybe you'll have a few late nights and moments of crisis, but at least your essay will be in that hole in the wall by Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. – which will leave you perfectly freed up to start procrastinating for the next one. ■



PROCRASTINATION

HARD WORK OFTEN PAYS OFF AFTER TIME,
BUT LAZINESS ALWAYS PAYS OFF NOW.

Quit!

• Kieran Bennett •

When you're part of an association you think can no longer claim to fulfil its mission, sometimes the only thing you can give is your resignation.



The ANU Students' Association (ANUSA) has failed its members.

In the face of a serious attack on students, ANUSA didn't so much as raise a finger. From 2007 the ANU will charge students 25% more in HECS, ensuring that the next generation of students will face increased debts and even more poverty than they presently experience. ANUSA is meant to be the advocate of student's interests, yet on this occasion ANUSA has not so much as released a statement condemning the increase. Considering the state of ANUSA, this is hardly surprising.

Following the introduction of VSU, ANUSA - our primary advocate - will be financially beholden to the organisation it is meant lobby to on students' behalf. ANUSA and the university have negotiated a \$272,000 grant to allow ANUSA to function in semester two. There is an understanding that these sorts of grants will continue to be issued in some way in the future.

With this grant ANUSA intends to fund the legal officer, welfare officer, administration manager (who runs the second hand book shop), and the wages of the executive. By continuing to fund these services through ANUSA, the university has ensured its compliance.

In a Students' Representative Council (SRC) meeting, President Laura Crespo drew the link between this financial insecurity and ANUSA's lack of action on the issue of HECS increases. Ms Crespo said the university needed increased funding to continue offering world-class services (e.g., our association with its grant pending), and that HECS increases were the only way to achieve this.

Ms Crespo will continue to fail students because she fails to see the compromised position of the association as a problem. Laura implicitly trusts the goodwill of the university's administration.

I encountered this in an interview with Ms Crespo late last year. She expressed the opinion that our Vice Chancellor was an intelligent, friendly person with pure motives and students' interests at heart.

Ms Crespo fails to see that, in issues

like this, interests of students and the institution differ: a student needs a degree and needs to come out of it with the minimum financial hardship, and the ANU's interest is in being a world class-university.

Last year when a government study came out ranking the ANU below numerous other Australian universities, we all promptly received an email reassuring us that the study was flawed and we really were world-class. The email came from that man with the student's interests at heart, Ian Chubb.

The SRC, of which I am a (soon-to-be former) member, facilitates ANUSA's failure of students.

The SRC is completely disconnected from the reality of student experience. The largest issue for the SRC this year (judged by time spent discussing it) was whether or not a letter of apology should be sent to Tony Abbott over the Union Court incident in O-week, whether it should apologise or simply express regret, and - most importantly - whether or not the letter should be signed.

The SRC hacks faction system aids in this disconnect; debates such as the letter-signing occur because they are championed by one faction or another, and are divided along factional lines.

ANUSA has failed, and will continue to fail students as an advocate. The position of the organisation within the ANU has been fundamentally compromised by becoming financially dependent upon the university its meant to represent students to.

The President fails to see her role as the fiery advocate of students, and instead views herself and the association as some kind of group of specialist consultants who should work on charters and sit on council meetings to better inform university of our needs, ever assuming they have our best interests at heart.

The SRC is a mostly uninterested organisation that would happily debate the position of a comma for an hour or two.

I have come to the conclusion that the best representation of the views of students that I can offer the association is my resignation. ■

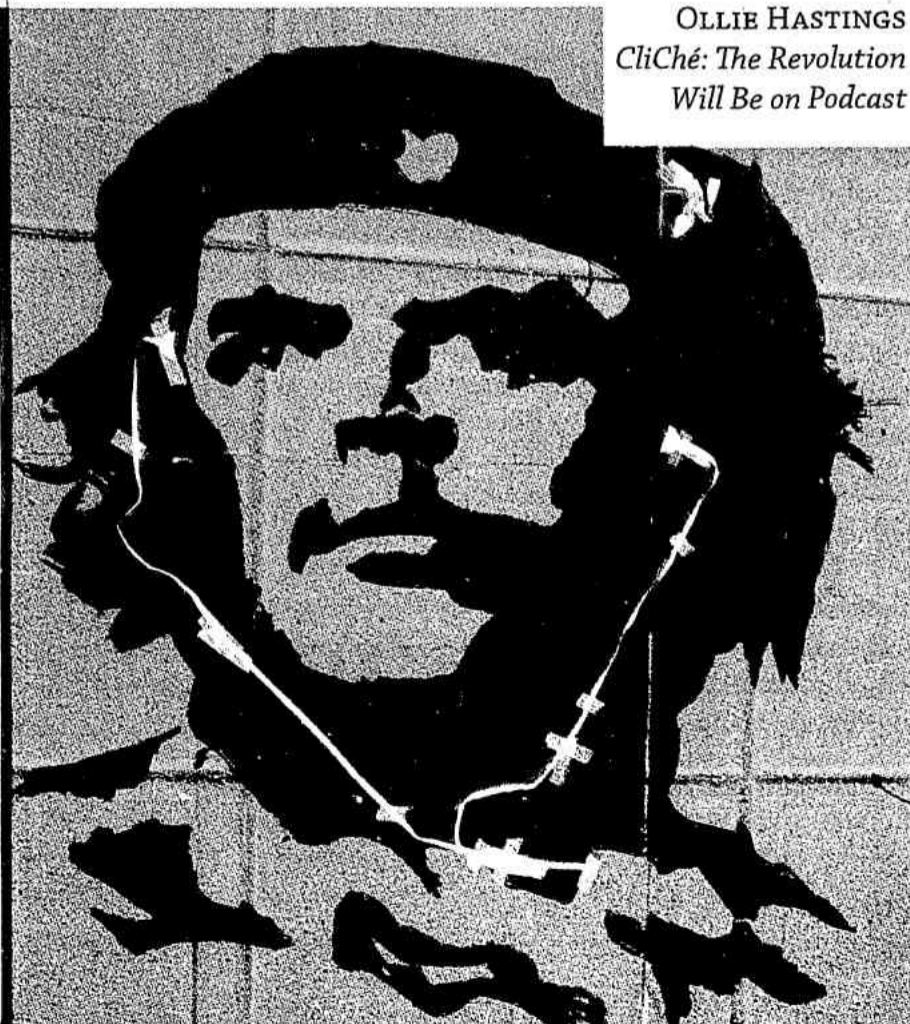
INSTALLATIONS USING PLASTIC SHEET AND TAPE



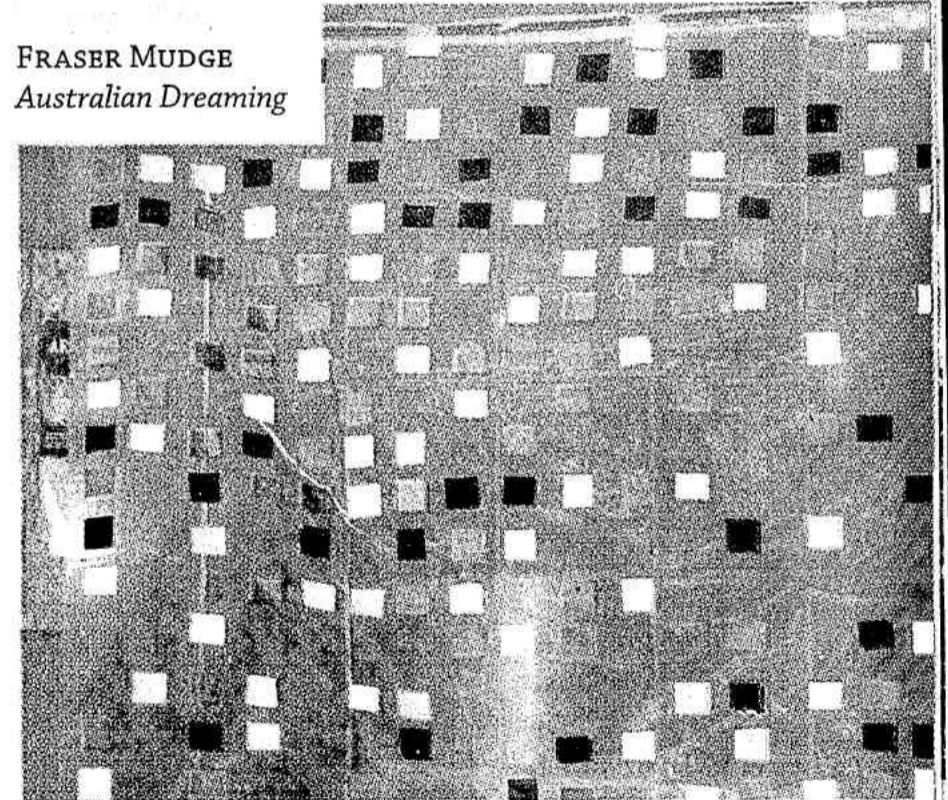
LIZ KERWIN
Big Black Bomb



MJ BLYTH and
DEIRDRE KELAHER
OIL



OLLIE HASTINGS
*CliChé: The Revolution
Will Be on Podcast*



FRASER MUDGE
Australian Dreaming

Hilltop Hoods @ ANU

Saad Hafiz & Clint Smoker



The ANU Refectory is in desperate need of a new air conditioner.

On an unusually cold April evening the Hilltop Hoods have just finished playing a sold-out show to a rapturous crowd at the ANU. Outside in the cold of Union Court, two seemingly satisfied punters are rolling a post-performance joint of gargantuan proportions, while in Pajenka's Cafe, Pressure and Suffa, the group's two MCs, have just stepped off stage, their t-shirts saturated in sweat.

The Hoods know how to put on a great show. Constantly talking to the audience, they were able to create an atmosphere with an intensity that I have not seen matched by any other live show at the ANU, all the while unimpeded by the puddles of sweat and steady stream of wayward crowd surfers who occupied the stage.

Their set begins with the opening track from their new album *The Hard Road*, "Recapturing the Vibe" – a strangely beautiful, almost eerie track. It combines layers of rapping with strings, drums, bass guitar and old school samples that creates a nostalgic feel, almost like being reacquainted with an old friend. The crowd certainly interprets it as such: the opening track instantly sets them off, clawing at the massive security barrier that separates them from the band, dozens of people finding it difficult to breathe with the combined weight of several hundred bodies inclining on top of them.

Meeting the Band

Suffa, or Matt, is tall, pale, unshaven. A chain-smoking 28-year-old,

his polite and his affable disposition stands in contrast to the preconceptions most people harbour about rappers being loud, ostentatious, and aggressive. Pressure, or Dan, is similarly tall and pale but decidedly better groomed than his on-stage offside. Slightly self-conscious about his age, Pressure is the more reserved of the MCs. DJ Debris, or Barry, is short and quiet; his silver chain and sublime ability as a turntablist aren't quite enough to belie the sense that he is the nerdy one of the trio.

Collectively, they come across as very intelligent, as articulate in conversation offstage as they are able rhyimers on.

The group – whose name is derived from an area of Adelaide's commercial precinct of O'Halloran Hill, known locally as the "Hilltop" – was originally formed when MCs Suffa and Pressure met at Blackwood High School.

"We hated each other at first and only became pals when we started rapping for shits and giggles. We met in 1990 and started taking ourselves seriously in around 1993."

It was a long time before the Hoods were taken seriously by the Australian public. Their first three releases – *Back Once Again* (EP, 1997), *A Matter of Time* (1999), and *Left Foot, Right Foot* (2001) – were all met with a modest reception from the public.

Hip-hop was seen as the exclusive province of black American culture, the idea of MCs with Australian accents proving a hard sell.

"We were travelling to interstate shows where we'd play to audiences of five people," says Pressure.

It wasn't until their third album, *The Calling* (2003), was released that the Hoods' music finally reached a wider audience. After more than a decade of perse-



Right Crowd at the Refectory
Below Debris, Suffa, and Pressure outside Woroni's office

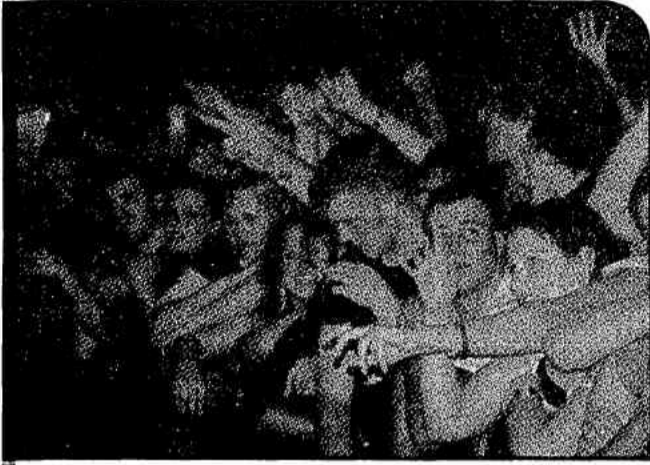


verance they became the first Australian hip hop group to have an album reach gold status, and two of its tracks ("Nosebleed Section" and "Dumb Enough") won 9th and 44th places in the Triple J Hottest 100.

"That was when I thought, 'Shit, we're really doing something,'" says Suffa.

With mainstream recognition for the Hilltop Hoods came a sea change in public attitudes towards Australian hip-hop. Acts have followed in the path the group carved out, making an art form of rapping in accents so preoccupied with vowels and forgetful of consonants that makes them unmistakably Australian.

The change in public attitudes has enabled an emergence of Australian hip-hop. Where rap music has traditionally been connected with the American trend of ar-



rogant posturing and lyrics that draw heavily on violence, the Australian form is much more intelligent and self-deprecating – cheeky, even – drawing on subject matter that ranges from Schapelle Corby to Mark Latham.

The Hard Road is surely the finest example of this emerging style, over which the Hilltop Hoods are unrivalled as MCs. From the first moment of the first track, you know *The Hard Road* is going to be good. As soon as you hear the crowd screaming and the piano, you get shivers down your spine. Then the drums come in, and the pitched up vocal... followed by a mix of samples and scratching. Then MC Pressure begins. Oh, yes, it is going to be a wild ride.

The sound quality of the album is far better than that of *The Calling*, which had a somewhat old school, 1980s hip-hop feel to it, something the group attributes to new production equipment.

Suffa is the main production talent behind the Hilltop Hoods' sound, and he is very good at what he does. His sounds are flawless, and, incredibly, the Hoods do everything themselves except final mastering. Not many people do the production, recording, and final mix-down themselves, and even fewer have it sound as good as this.

As for party tracks, there are no shortage, the best probably

being "The Blue Blooded", with a host of guest appearances and a somewhat aggressive sound to it. "Clown Prince" and the title track will have you bopping, and the brilliant "What a Great Intro" is a sonic and lyrical masterpiece. The electric guitar layered with the piano creates an incredibly rich and warm wall of sound and adds a melody.

Being staples in the hip-hop sample set, flutes and pianos – both Rhodes and acoustic – are prominent. This means that most of the songs have a melody of some sort, something which cannot be said of much hip-hop these days, so there is definitely a hum-along factor.

Although better sound quality adds a new dimension to the record, some listeners will obviously miss the rustic, warm, dirty sound of the last album; it added character and was differentiated it from commercial American hip-hop, with the trademark polished sounds of Dr Dre and ilk.

This and the fact that the album debuted at number 1 on the ARIA charts will doubtlessly prove fodder for the critics waiting to criticise *The Hard Road* as being a commercial record.

On the album's secret track, which serves as an open letter to their critics, Suffa outlines the problem of taking a genre that had been previously been the province of the underground to the mainstream: "If you move too many units you fuck the underground/ They see a tall poppy and want to cut it down."

But he denies that *The Hard Road* is a radical departure from the Hoods' earlier style. "I think it's a more underground album if anything. It's darker and more aggressive." He also repudiates the idea that selling out shows or increasing record sales necessarily

means a group has sold out:

"It's a pretty arrogant attitude to have, trying to actively exclude people from listening to your music. We welcome anyone to our shows."

But have the trappings of fame and fortune which doubtlessly follow on from having two consecutive gold records changed life for the Hilltop Hoods?

Suffa responds to the question by pointing out the group's touring van, parked forlornly in Union

Do they find themselves the object of unwanted attention? Are they ever mobbed by fans in public?

'Nah, not really,' Pressure says. 'Some guy in a bar tried to **hump my leg** once, though.'

Court. It's off-white, bulky, and dented; Snoop Dogg wouldn't be caught dead in it. He notes with some amusement the 12" tyres.

It's a testament to the uniqueness of the Australian hip-hop scene that the country's premier MCs are being transported to and from shows on such impossibly small tyres. (In the United States, it must be remembered, the size of a rapper's tyres are a source of considerable pride. See, e.g., Chingy: "Y'all ride 18s / We ride 26s / Big truck big wheels rolling ova ditches...")

"We're keeping the tiny wheels attitude towards life," Suffa laughs.

Surely, though, their increasing fan-base must have changed life. Do they find themselves the object of unwanted media attention, are they ever mobbed by fans in public?

"Nah, not really," Pressure says. "Some guy in a bar tried to hump my leg once, though."

Enough said. ■

Clarkson hits top gear on contemporary issues

Saad Hafiz celebrates Britain's finest motoring journalist as he branches out

I like books. This is why I read them, and why I am writing about one now.

The problem with books is that they generally take a large proportion of my day to read, if they have something worthwhile to say, or are entertaining. Or worse, they require you to read other books first.

How wonderful it is then, to read a book such as *The World According to Clarkson* by Jeremy Clarkson, of BBC's *Top Gear* fame. Clarkson is undoubtedly Britain's (and quite possible the world's) finest motoring journalist, both in print and on camera. I am pleased to report that his skill also translates to other mediums.

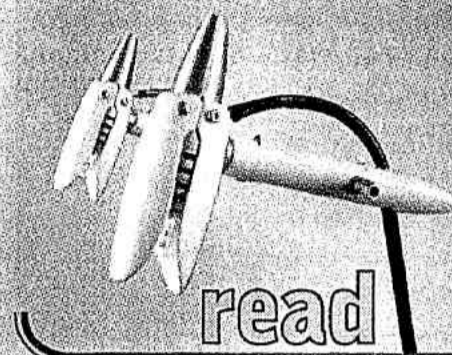
The World According to Clarkson is about nothing in particular, being a compilation of his best British *Sunday Times* opinion pieces, with topics ranging from why too much science is bad for our health, that we have too many holidays, to why Britain is less-than-perfect.

Clarkson is one of the most opinionated people I have ever come across, but unlike some he

is convincing at the same time, drawing you in and making you believe. Topics such as "Cricket's the National Sport of Time Wasters" convinces you that cricket is less a sport than a way to pass the time "from a bygone age when people invested their money in time rather than things".

In addition to the numerous humorous entries, there are some that are actually quite serious and inspire thought, like those on the EU and political correctness gone too far.

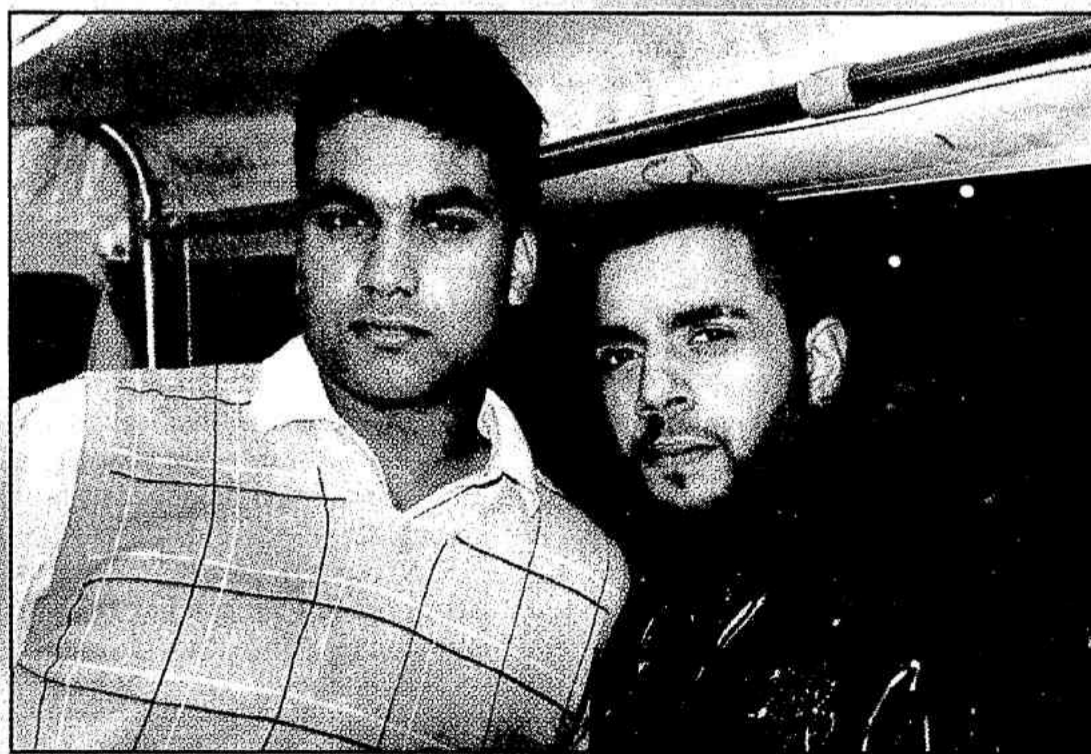
One which I particularly enjoyed is entitled "Speaking as a Father, I'll Never Be a Mother". Clarkson argues that mothers always win custody battles, citing himself as an example, when his wife went away for the weekend: "I'd sort of glossed over the boring bits, or made a mess of them, and concentrated on teaching my six-year-old how to drive round the paddock on my new off-road go-kart, which is strictly not to be used by under sixteens." Clarkson concludes the matter nicely: "To fathers, kids are fun. To mother,



they're a responsibility... why, if there's no option, courts have to side with the mums."

Clarkson's prose is completely informal, but a history book could be written in the same style. Seemingly boring topics (such as dentists, art galleries, and private school) become captivating. A favourite entry for me was "I Wish I'd Chosen Marijuana and Biscuits over Real Life", where Clarkson wishes he didn't drop out of university, despite the fact that he has done very well for himself. He cites the Vice-Chancellor of Brunel University, "saying that there are 50 institutions in Europe that go back more than a thousand years. There's the Catholic Church, the Parliaments of Britain... All the rest are universities. They work. And I missed out. And to my dying day I shall regret it."

Funnily enough, although Clarkson is famed for his hooning in *Top Gear*, and motoring writing, I cannot recall one entry about cars. The closest item is where he writes about Concorde and the space shuttle, with a similar passion to cars. He argues that accidents happen (referring to the space shuttle *Columbia* disaster): "Piecing *Columbia* together again and trying to figure out what went wrong is a

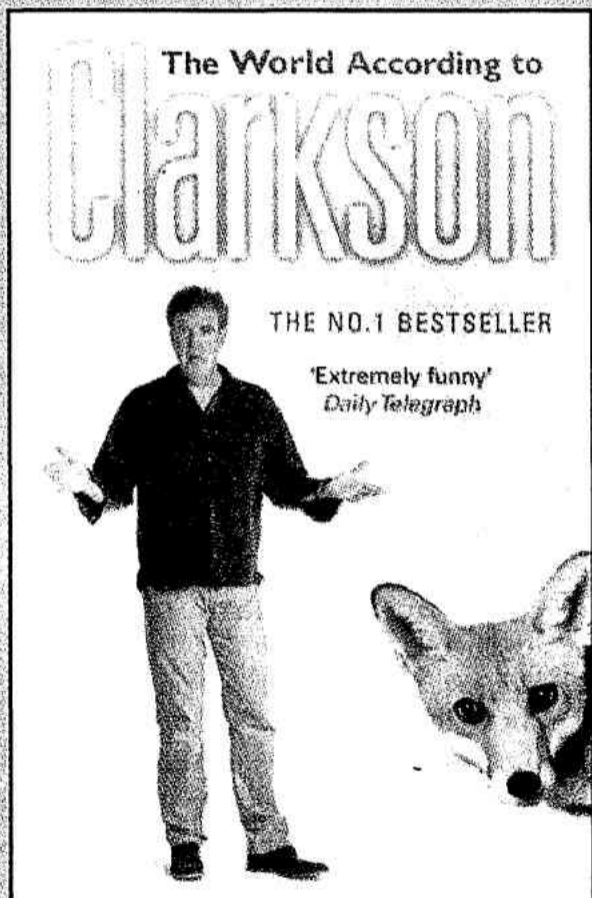


PR stunt. Plainly, in a 20-year-old craft that's been to space 28 times there is no design fault."

Clarkson is clearly very passionate about Concorde, with the longest article entitled "A Giant Leap Backwards for Mankind". "Concorde was an extraordinary technological achievement... one of the greatest." It was a political achievement also - France and Britain could never agree on anything - and it was a craft, forty-years-old at that, which remains still at the cutting edge today. NASA says that the technological challenge of building Concorde was greater than that of putting man on the moon.

I would suggest everyone with a sense of humour and an ounce of common sense to read *The World According to Clarkson*. It will make you feel that perhaps you are not alone in the world in your thinking. And those without common sense, you should still read it, as may give you some.

Saad Hafiz (left, facing page) is leader of the West Midlands Tooting Massive.



Æon Flux

Toby Halligan

Watching *Æon Flux* was like eating seafood pizza. Seafood is good and pizza is good, but combine them and you have a fishy mush with barbecue sauce and prawns.

Charlize Theron is a great actress and the MTV cartoon series (by Peter Chung, who also directed the opening credits for *Rug Rats* and worked on the *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*) which the film is loosely based on has become a cult classic among anime fans for breaking with narrative conventions.

In the cartoons the main character Æon died constantly and you were never quite sure who the good guys were.

Æon Flux is set four hundred years into the future. 99% of the human race has been destroyed in a calamitous plague. The only reason that the final 1% survive is thanks to the efforts of Trevor Goodchild, a scientist who cures the plague.

The remaining people live in a city known as Bregna, where descendants of Goodchild lead a totalitarian government. Æon Flux is a member of a secret dissident society, the Monikons, whose goal is to kill the Goodchilds and free the people of Bregna.

The opening sequence epitomises what is good about the film, combining the athleticism of Flux with imaginative computer-generated special effects. It's quite cool and there are a number of well choreographed sequences involving flux and various allies using or fighting weird and wonderful gadgets (from razor grass that follows you as you move, to trees that shoot darts at you).

Unfortunately, a film cannot be carried by effects alone. The fight scenes are tired by the end with Flux typically overwhelming opponents with a jab here or kick there. Since both *The Matrix* and

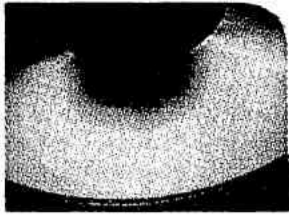


Kill Bill, I think, the standards for fight scenes have gone up. As a fan of both the aforementioned films I felt underwhelmed by the action scenes. Sadly they were all the film had going for it.

The plot is relatively tedious and the "twist" (if it can be called that) is, frankly, bleedingly obvious. The main dynamic in the film, between Flux and Goodchild, is extremely awkward. To be blunt, they're both shit and it was boring to watch them act together. She should have focused on beating him up.

So if you like Theron in revealing outfits or razor grass, this is your cup of tea. If you liked the cartoons, enjoy martial arts or action films or, Heaven forbid, decent performances from the leads, then fuck this film off and go get drunk. Or go to sleep, you'll save ten bucks.





cd

The (International) Noise Conspiracy, *Armed Love*

Ben Hermann



It's ironic that a group which prides itself on being staunchly socialist (to the point that they wrote "Capitalism Stole My Virginity") had the release of their latest album delayed by close to two years due to infighting and bickering between major record labels.

Armed Love was released in Europe in late 2004, but has only just been released in the US and Australia due to the band's label American Recordings deciding to switch from Island/Def Jam to Warner Bros.

Unfortunately, the wait hasn't been wholly worth the while. *Armed Love*, while containing the T(I)NC's usually style of garage rock accompanied by some strategically placed keyboards, lacks the urgency and force of their previous recordings.

It's hard to tell how much the emphasis on melody rather than volume was influenced by production heavyweight Rick Rubin, but even putting aside the prominent place of poppy hooks on this record, the lyrics are still vague and ambiguous. There are references to a "new world" and "better days" but these could be just as much about life with a new lover rather than a world without

consumerism.

When Dennis Lyxzen sings "I wanna make you feel the way I feel when I'm with you" on "The Way I Feel About You", or "We feel the earth shake as we move/ We wanna taste the sensation" on "This Side of Heaven", you get the feeling that the group's attention is nowadays more upon their "fucking in the streets" mentality rather than their vision of violent revolution and the destruction of capitalism.

The group shows they can still write lyrically-engaging and musically fist-thrusting songs with "Like a Landslide" and "Communist Moon", but even these are incomparable to tracks from previous albums like "Smash it Up" or "Up for Sale".



It's disappointing that a group which I'm sure still holds the same ideals and aspirations as it did six years ago hasn't been able to enunciate these through their music.

For new listeners, the band's political tendencies could easily be attributed to trendy rebellion, like seeing someone at McDonald's with a Che Guevara t-shirt. You could certainly find it hard to



believe that the Dennis Lyxzen on this album was the same person who almost a decade ago was screaming "I'd rather be dead than live by your design" or "I'll have my coup d'état... I will hold your burning flag in my hand".

This is certainly an enjoyable rock record, but is little more. It's not gonna get your blood boiling, and it certainly isn't going to change the world. ■

Yeah Yeah Yeahs, *Show Your Bones*

Ben Hermann



From the very opening drum beat of *Show Your Bones* – simple and unrestrained, and sounding

a little like the beat from "We Will Rock You" – it's fairly obvious that this album is going to be a strong departure from elements of the group's debut LP *Fever to Tell*.

While some groups attempt to shake off the pressure of a sophomore release by masking their anxiousness and fear with a veneer of ferocity and volume, Yeah Yeah Yeahs sound more like

they've taken a few deep breaths, maybe some "relaxants", and actually looked back on their debut release to discover what worked and what didn't.

The result is that *Show Your Bones* is a step up in terms of musical progression and maturity from *Fever to Tell*.

The most obvious characteristic of this album is the almost complete absence of arty-punk vocal outbursts. There are no tracks like "Tick" or "Date With the Night" on this album, although the absence of Karen O's theatrical dying-duck screaming will undoubtedly help attract just as many fans as it will repel.

The emotional melody and finesse which the group showed they had so much potential to produce on one of *Fever to Tell*'s standout tracks "Maps" has been improved upon on tracks such as "Turn Into", "Dudley", and one of the album's highlights, "Cheated Hearts", where Karen O sings: "Sometimes I think that I'm bigger than the sound." How suitable.

Even on weightier tracks like "Phenomena" and "Honeybear", the group channels its energy into a powerful yet restrained sound. It's as though the song were originally written at double the pace, only for the group to realise that playing it at half-speed would put in more force and precision.

The most captivating aspect of this album is the vast lack of anything remotely resembling filler. Each song is so completely different from that which precedes it and yet the album still has an enthralling flow and motion which allows it to be listened to over and over again without a sense of repetition.

Yeah Yeah Yeahs have managed to replicate the positive aspects of *Fever to Tell*, largely discarded that album's negatives, and have produced a work which will undoubtedly make their next release even more anticipated. ■

*dance classes for adults
all levels*

Canberra
Dance
Theatre

If you are over 15, enjoy moving and dancing then come and try a class with us. Pay for one class and try all the classes we have on offer for the week, to make sure you find the perfect dance class for you.

contemporary

belly dance

funk / hip hop

pilates & yoga

world tribal

dance for women

classical ballet

children & parents

Canberra Dance Theatre, in operation since 1978, delivering quality dance programs, performances and classes in the ACT, nationally and internationally.

studio hire - the studio is available to rent for dance and theatre projects, individual practice, small group rehearsals and workshops.

Visit the website

www.canberradancetheatre.org

or contact (02) 6248 0919

Public lecture

• *Lessons in the fight against corruption* •

Thursday, 18 May 2006

6-7 p.m., APSEG Lecture Theatre (Sir Roland Wilson Building)

WHO:

- Barbara Clay, Communications Director of Transparency International (based in Berlin), and former communications director at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Ways and Means Committee in the US Congress
- Dr Iftekhar Zaman, Executive Director of Transparency International Bangladesh

WHAT:

- Ms Clay and Dr Zaman will speak on their experience of working in a major non-government organisation and lessons for the international fight against corruption, and respond to questions

An Australian in New York

Peter Carey – an acute observer of the Australian psyche, yet one who hasn't visited the country in nigh on two decades – chats with **Justin Pritchard**

Imagine that someone told you the best chronicler of Australia's modern character was someone who hasn't lived here since before the first Gulf War, and who remains abroad while the Second Gulf War continues.

Peter Carey holds that honour. A dual Australian-American citizen, he has resided in New York, the locus of American patriotism, for the last sixteen years. Whilst it is brazen of me to decide this, it is the bulk of his catalogue, the way in which he makes the historical resonate with Australia's modern character and the great international audience he has built for himself which elevates him above the horde.

After winning Australia's top literary prize, the Miles Franklin Award, for his 1981 novel *Bliss* and being short-listed for the 1985 Booker Prize for *Illywhacker*, Carey won the 1988 Booker Prize for his novel *Oscar and Lucinda*. The latter explored the Australian trait of gambling, not just in a monetary sense, but the risk undertaken by all Australian ancestors, whether indigenous or European.

Carey would later elucidate on this in a public writing exercise where six Australian authors wrote draft preambles to a republican constitution of Australia: "We are a nation, most of all, made by people whose ancestors gambled everything to travel through storm, through war, through the dreary deadly ocean, who abandoned eve-

rything familiar to reach this continent."

The prize secured Carey a place at the top of the cast of the Commonwealth's writers, alongside Salman Rushdie, Kazuo Ishiguro, and Margaret Atwood. It also created a paparazzi-like fascination about his every move within the literati – one not exclusively limited to his professional life.

The reading public was eager to see how he would follow the brilliance of *Oscar*. When he decided in 1990 to sell his share in the Sydney advertising agency he had created to move to New York (before the release of the follow-up to *Oscar*), his personal reputation was set upon.

Australian patriots asked why Australia's best writer was moving away from the country he depicted with a degree of warmth in his novels, thinking that it could only be for the reason that fame had changed him. Passionate critics threateningly questioned his ability to continue writing about Australia when he could not witness first-hand the reverberations in the politics of the day.

But Carey has continued to view the Australian character in both historical and modern times from afar. Despite rumours that in 1999 he had completed research and was early into the writing of a novel set in New York, he scrapped it for his most prolific success, the 2001 novel *True History of the Kelly Gang*, which also won the Booker

Prize.

Carey says there's a reason why, since leaving Australia, all six of his novels (like the three he wrote before he left) have been heavily set in Australia or reflect its British colonial origins: "I would say that as evident in my work the thing I'm thinking about is Australia; that I'm not there."

With *True History*, Carey built on the Commonwealth audience he had established for himself and the Australian literary scene. Such was the success of the reviews in the US that Carey has often since been labelled by their press as a New Yorker rather than an Australian. Despite his naturalised American citizenship, Carey maintains that he had no desire to do so when he first moved there, instead thinking pragmatically.

"It is not a sentimental choice but what you do to protect your children's inheritance."

Carey's critical reception has included genuflecting praise for novels like *Oscar*, *True History*, and *Jack Maggs*. Yet when questioned about how he felt when his follow-up novels to his Booker Prize winning ones (*The Tax Inspector* and *My Life as a Fake*) were critical and commercial failures, he reacts as if they should have won the Booker, too.

"I don't know where you got that shit from. Actually I think I know where you got that shit from – but if you want to look internationally at *My Life as a Fake* there



are people who think it's my best book... *My Life as a Fake* certainly was published a time when internationally fiction wasn't selling; but if you want to check out international reviews you'll find it's not a failure."

The \$US350,000 advance he received for *My Life as a Fake* was commensurate with that of a Booker winner's follow-up, but so was the tepidness of the reviews.

Critically it may have been mixed, as a writer like Carey invariably provokes with subject choices ranging from an advertising executive reborn into Hell to a malformed three-foot-six juggler to a 139-year-old carnival trickster. But for *My Life*, selling just 7,500 copies in the US, it was a commercial disaster.

Carey is far less ferocious but no less protective of *The Tax Inspector*, his follow-up to *Oscar*.

"I think we've got very good self-protective mechanisms. Having said that, I have to contradict myself. When *The Tax Inspector* was published in Australia, it received what I consider very dumb reviews. I was sort of outraged. I was angry – [it] wasn't very reflective at all, so reflection isn't really something that comes with public reception – whether success or failure. I mean it's better to be successful, seen to be successful, than to be seen to have failed."

Carey at first seems to share a common trait with the main character of his new novel *Theft: A Love Story*: an acute awareness to critical reception. In *Theft*, the main character Butcher Bones is a recently famous but quickly forgotten artist, whose voice tangles of resentment at the capriciousness of the art world.

Theft begins: "I don't know if my story is grand enough to be a tragedy, although a lot of shitty stuff did happen. It is certainly a love story, but that did not begin until midway through the shitty stuff, by which time I had not only lost my eight-year-old son, but also

my house and studio in Sydney where I had once been about as famous as a painter could expect to be in his own backyard. It was the year I should have got the Order of Australia – Why not! – look at who they gave them to."

But Carey is different, insofar as he is less focussed on comparison with other artists (as Butcher is) and the competition the press creates between authors in order to make it more accessible, especially through the hype of prizes as rivalry rather than acknowledgment.

"I don't think there's anything necessarily wrong with the prizes – what's wrong is where the culture of the prize determines what people read."

He appears to adopt an air of disdain towards the Booker Prize, and all other prizes, which is increasingly common amongst authors who want to be seen as rebelling against the literary establishment. But in fact he is merely sceptical of the prize's benefit to the audience.

For the author, Carey explains that to be recognised as the best writer of the Commonwealth in any given year, by even a small clique of judges, is an honour he remembers giddily.

"I really loved to win the Booker Prize, and also the first time I won it, I was so... sort of... I didn't want to be a show off or think of myself as special so I sort of hid from it and I left London after a day. And then the years rolled on and it was suddenly 1990 and 1992, and I think, 'Shit, I was an idiot, I should have enjoyed myself.'

"And winning it the second time I allowed myself to be pleased and not carry on like a dumb curmudgeon. It was a thrill. I'm not trying to be cool about, but if you want look at the prize is and how it exists in society, than that is different to how it feels for me."

Author's shelf

Peter Carey recommends:

- *Austerlitz* and *Rings of Saturn*, WG Sebald
- *Nostramo*, Joseph Conrad
- *The Regeneration Trilogy*, Pat Parker
- *The Year of Magical Thinking*, Joan Didion
- *Memento Mori*, Muriel Spark

It's clear that Carey is attuned to what his audience thinks. He considers interviewers part of his audience, but they are a minority who implant simplistic ideas in to the heads of potential readers due to misinterpretations and factual errors.

In interviews he is difficult, pernickety to detail, and not at all cordial when correcting an interviewer. In our brief discussion, he took me to task about my sources not once, but three times. His tone was aggravated and the interview ended with giddy expressions of praise on my part and a brash "thanks" before an immediate click on the other end of the line.

What was illuminated in the aftermath of the interview is that Carey is far more focussed on his audience than his own image.

Theft deals with the inspirations of artists in their process, the ways people interpret art and the way in which the artist views himself in the public eye. Peter Carey shares many common experiences with Butcher Bones – he is recently divorced, he grew up in the small Victorian town of Bacchus Marsh, grew to become an internationally acclaimed author having endured the fickleness of metropolitan artistic scenes which appear in the novel: Sydney, Tokyo, and New York. He also has a fascination with fakery.

Theft is an art-crime thriller but it is also the artist's reflection – sometimes about his art, but mostly about the way in which he is viewed publicly, especially when he meets Marlene Leibovitz, the daughter-in-law of the famous



« modernist painter Jacques Leïbovitz, and the only worthy colleague of Picasso's. Instantly enchanted by nothing more than her appearance and allure of the art scene, he remembers, flickeringly, Butcher's artistic intentions yield to his more primal ones and lead to a confrontation with the cosmopolitan art world where genuine creations are entangled with fakery.

Thrown into the plot is Butcher's idiot savant brother, Hugh "Slow" Bones, who holds the other half of the novel's narrative. Not as famous but no less intelligent than his brother, Hugh's narrative is resplendent with Australian colloquialisms and rational observations about his brother's irascible temperament.

Butcher resents being forced to care for his brother, juxtaposing one brother who is treading the line between fame and being forgotten and another brother who already has been.

Critics have called this novel everything from the novel that has pushed Carey to the levels of a literary deity to a divorce novel with very little structure, showing the state of Carey's personal life at the present time. Having recently divorced his wife of twenty years, his personal life is one of the most talked about on the literary scene.

Yet Carey remains focussed on his audience, perhaps partially for a desire to ignore his personal life, but also because of a genuine appreciation for art and what it means to his audience, which he still considers primarily – but not exclusively – Australian.

"I make an assumption that my primary readership is Australian... I've got to think about the characters. They're Australian; this is how they're going to think about things. And when we read across cultures or even read across time, say when you're reading Charles Dickens and reading about things, where you're reading Stendhal and

The Red and the Black – they're full of footnotes and things we don't understand. But we read it."

Carey has been mentioned in the same breath as Günter Grass and Salman Rushdie as a national storyteller. All three of these authors have an ability to encapsulate national mentalities and their relationship with national histories, and Carey has always been concerned with lessons about the Australian character and where Australia is headed in today's world.

But *Theft* is Carey's most un-Australian novel for some time. Carey has used international settings before this novel, but never have the Australian settings been so lifeless by comparison.

Perhaps this is because the driving narrative comes from a narcissist artist, who reveals nothing about the influences around him, only his own sense of genius. His brother's narrative, filled with Australian colloquialisms, displays the quirks of the language but delivers no real insight in to their significance or the experience they imply.

As the title suggests, the novel is a love story. There is not just one though, there are several; ranging from enforced love of kin to the love which the artist thinks he feels for Marlene, whether for what she is or the lifestyle she represents. *Theft* is a masterly study of relationships, but is a departure insofar as Carey has focussed less on Australian subject matter and has failed in the parts where he has focussed on it.

Yet this should not detract from Carey's stature as Australia's national storyteller. He has written about Australia with success both when he lived here and when he adopted an American base.

With his attempts to put his divorce behind him (and the media), this may have been the perfect opportunity for Carey to fulfil his previous expressions of desire

to return to Australia one day. Yet despite his current situation and previous statements, Carey could not be less motivated to come back than he is at present.

"If I was here all the time, I would be so fucking irritated and enraged by all sorts of things all the time about Australia... I'll go online and read something or other and go, 'O, God, how mediocre,' or, 'How unjust.'"

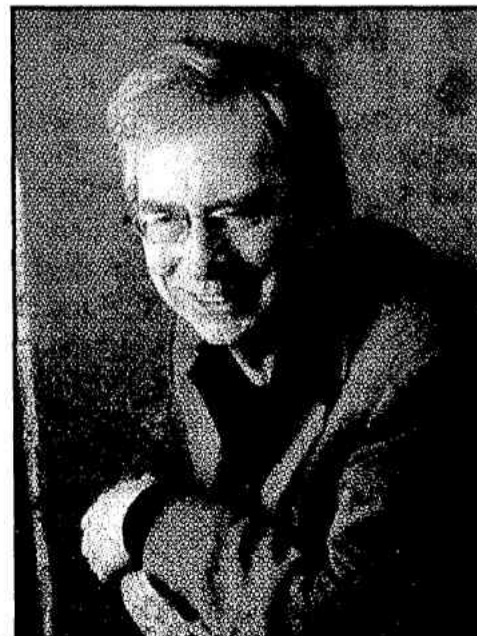
Stylistically, *Theft* is nowhere near Peter Carey's best. Punctuation tricks work no charm as they did in *True History*. The narrative of the resentfully ferocious yet emotionally susceptible Butcher Bones is far stronger than that of idiot savant brother Hugh.

His slow-paced prose, which contains some bafflingly ineffective metaphors is less suited to an art-crime thriller than it was to the ventriloquism he applied to the psychology of Ned Kelly, where every word was so perfectly phrased that it romanced away any notion that Ned Kelly may have been an apathetic brute.

At the very least, *Theft* illuminates Australia's position in the modern world. Just like Butcher is to Marlene, and Hugh is to Butcher, the Bones brothers each have a submissive role to play in the relationships they form.

Australia is the Bones brothers – talented and looking for progress in any shape that it may take. Yet just as easily disposable when the dirty work has been done. ■

***Theft: A Love Story*, published by Knopf, is out now.**



BITS & PIFCOES

Liberators terrified

Animal rights protesters have allegedly endured terror at the hands of abattoir workers.

Liberationists chained themselves to equipment at the Churchill Abattoir in Ipswich, Queensland, to protest the World Meat Congress meeting in Brisbane.

Slaughterers, far from halted by the break-in, instead took to the chains with angle-grinders, all the while allegedly "standing around cheering and whooping and yelling and making lewd comments," said protester Angie Stephenson.

The ANU is looking to retain the slaughterers as security when Socialist Alternative holds another pointless Iraq rally.

Judge's secret code in *Da Vinci* ruling

Justice Peter Smith, the judge who recently ruled that *The Da Vinci Code* plot was not plagiarism, has put a secret code in his ruling.

Dan Tench realised certain letters in the ruling were italicised.

The italicised letters scattered



throughout the judgment read: "smithcodeJaeiextostpsacgreasmq wfkadpmqz".

Smith has revealed the code means "Smithy Code Jackie Fisher who are you Dreadnought", a tribute to the 1906 launch of naval reformer Fisher's *HMS Dreadnought*.

The code had become an obsession of London's top legal minds. "Not one billable hour has been done," said lawyer Mark Stephens.

Nekkid man rescued from own chimney

It would have made the perfect "dumb crims" story, but instead a homeowner has proven even the innocent can be idiotic.

Neighbours called police after hearing a voice calling for help from the chimney.

When police came to the home of 23-year-old Michael Urbano they were expecting to find a would-be burglar.

Instead, police and firefighters ended up having to rescue him.

Having mislaid his keys, Mr Urbano started to lower himself into the chimney when the cable he was using as support snapped.

He was naked, police said, because he thought "the clothes would rub up against [the cement]

and slow him down".

He has been charged with being under the influence of drugs.

Launder this money!

Sewer maintenance in the German town of Kiel, carried out after the pipe became blocked, has uncovered some 60,000DM.

It was realised that a pensioner had been flushing the old German currency down the toilet because he didn't realise they could still be exchanged for euros.

He later took the dried-out money to a bank, where it was converted to about €30,000.

Beans to lose their social stigma?

For years beans have suffered – or enjoyed – a reputation based on their side-effects.

Beans contain indigestible fibre and raffinose, which are fed upon by gas-producing bacteria.

Lactobacillus casei and *L. plantarum* seem to digest those materials without producing the gas.

Cowboys have expressed concern that, once *Blazing Saddles'* only memorable moment becomes meaningless, *Brokeback Mountain* will be the public's sole source of cowboy information.



The

Environmentalists risk life and limb in battle to save our air

Environmentalist Bjorn Hammerhead has always considered himself a man of his convictions.

As a child he remembers cutting his mother's brake cables to prevent her from using their Volvo, which ran on leaded petrol. He also fondly recalls burning down an old tyre dump because "it was scaring the birds". And now Mr Hammerhead is taking his commitment to the environment to a new level.

After discovering that methane is a major source of greenhouse gases Bjorn has sworn to stop farting until greenhouse gas levels return to pre-1990 levels.

"Farting is bad for our air, so I will stop farting. Lots of people have gone on hunger strikes for various causes. I consider this to be like a hunger strike except it's more about what I put out than what I take in."

Fellow Greenpeace activists,

while supportive of Mr Hammerhead, are uncertain about his capacity to stop farting.

Lisa Shrub, a long-time friend, recalled taking a holiday with Mr Hammerhead.

"It was a long car trip with Bjorn. We were in the car for about six hours. He farted for the entire trip! By the end I'd fainted and had to be revived with smelling salts. It's certainly good for us if he stops farting, but I don't know what impact it'll have on his health."

United Nations pollution expert Daniel Higginbottom was also uncertain about what kind of impact Hammerhead's behaviour would have.

"I mean, it's great that the guy cares, but with six billion other people in the world, all farting, with billion of cows, sheep, pigs, and lions all farting, it's hard to see what kind of impact it'll actually have."

For his part, Mr Hammerhead remains determined to "make the world cleaner one small puff of methane at a time".



Jack Ass video inspires generation of youth

Five years after the release of the first *Jack Ass* video, a generation of young people has embraced the sociological doctrine of "doing stupid shit to be cool".

Hospitals have reported a five-fold increase in the number of student related injuries, from groins damaged riding bikes into walls to arms broken jumping from roofs, not to mention a ten-fold increase in the number of foreign objects being inserted up anuses.

Proctologist Gerry Limpet indicated that he would have gone out of business but for all the adolescent males that seem to have

developed a penchant for inserting match box cars and crescent wrenches into their rectums in an attempt to impress their friends.



IN BRIEFS

Dungeons and Dragons line fails to impress at Mooseheads

Abu Ghraib detainee now into S&M scene

Explosion at environment action group; room empty

PARENTING ROOMS For Students & Staff



Two *parenting rooms* are available on campus.

- Chifley Library, 3rd floor
- Acton Early Childhood Centre, 22 Balmain Cres.

Features of this service include:

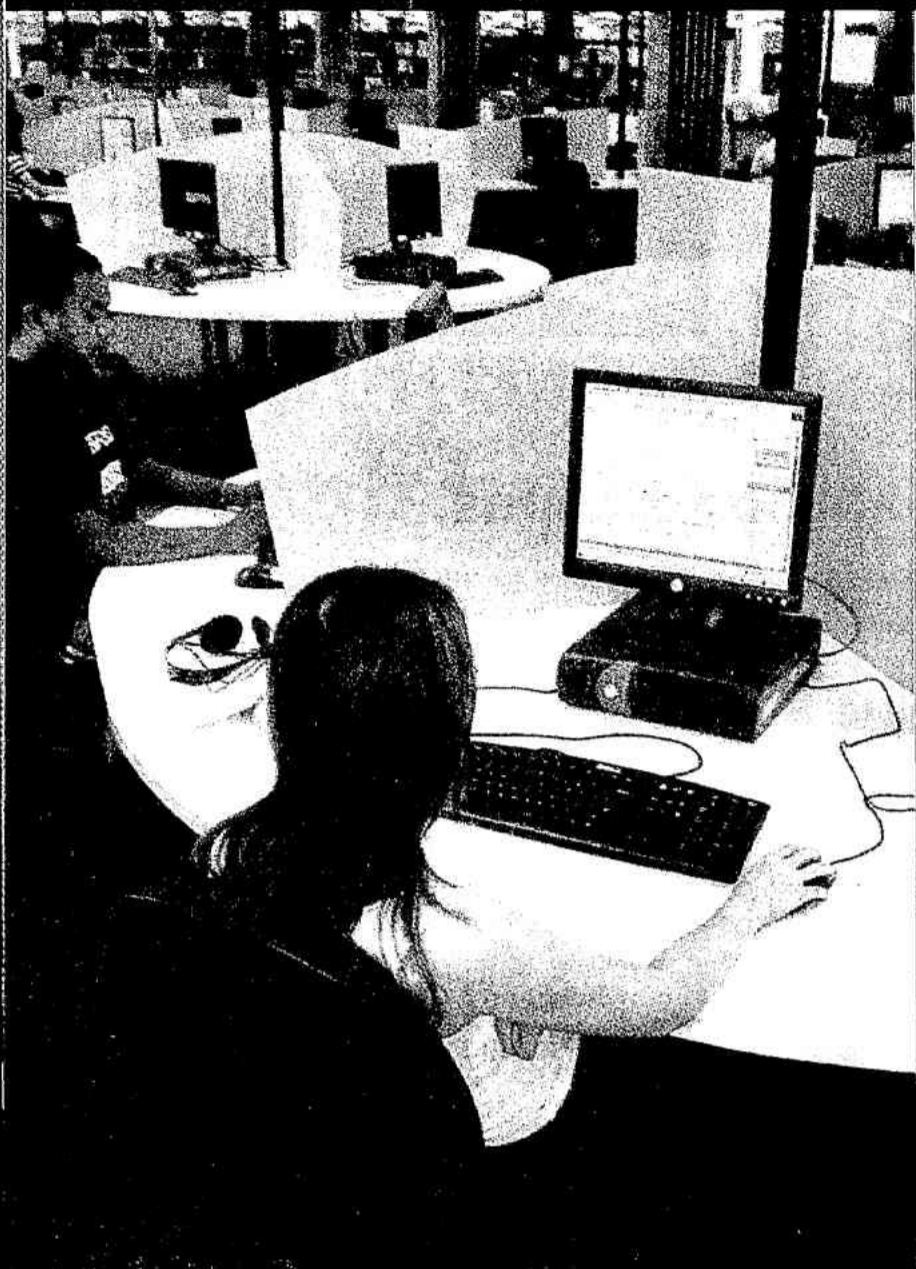
- **Key card access for privacy**
- **Baby changing table**
- **Nappy disposal unit**
- **Privacy screen for breastfeeding**
- **Comfortable chairs**
- **Kitchenette**

For information on accessing these new facilities please contact Equity & Diversity staff:

T: 6125 3352/6125 3868

E: EquityandDiversity@anu.edu.au

www.anu.edu.au/equity



Nef
378.947
WOR

ACCESS INFO

Access Recommended Course Readings
<http://library.anu.edu.au>

Get One-to-One Help
 @ any Library Information Desk or at Ask ANU in Chifley

Do It Yourself Online Training
<http://ilp.anu.edu.au/onlinetraining.html>

Get Into The Zone (prepare now for exams)
<http://ilp.anu.edu.au/examprep.html>

Last Year's Exams
<http://anulib.anu.edu.au/online/exams>

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE
 DIVISION OF INFORMATION
<http://information.anu.edu.au>



Make Woroni less boring!

Clichéd though it may sound, *Woroni* relies on students for its material. We can't publish if you don't submit stuff.

So why not give it a go? After all, we print all the letters we receive, and we're pretty open about the sorts of material we run as articles.

Some of the stuff we like are: letters, articles, gossip, news, sports stuff, and humour.

If you want to send in images or photos, go right ahead! Try to send us nice big originals so they look good in print.



Call for material

woroni@anu.edu.au
 By Saturday, 27th May

